

# **A Liturgy for Maundy Thursday To be Used in the Home**

## **Introduction**

How does Jesus show the fullness of his love to his disciples? He washes their feet. For Jesus and his disciples a practical need was to have clean feet. Why? Sandals, dust and donkeys make for a smelly problem that would likely kill any appetite. This is something a servant would usually do, but Jesus does it even though he is the leader. He washes their feet from the dirt and dust of the road so that they might share a meal together, and in so doing he models servant leadership.

A meal is not just eating together it is connecting with one another. It is sharing life with one another. By cleaning his disciples' feet Jesus enabled a time of friendship with his disciples and he says, that what he has done for them, so they should do for one another. They are to follow his example by serving one another in love. It is this practical expression of love that allows Jesus to share life with his disciples.

This act of serving love points to what Jesus did on the cross. Jesus, the Lord of Glory, humbly submitted himself by adopting human weakness and even death on a cross. It is by his enduring love that we were cleansed and freed to share life with him. We enter into that life when we acknowledge our need for his healing, and when we seek to follow his example of love in our day to day lives. That means we humble ourselves, we serve one another so that together we might share in Jesus' love. We do this symbolically when we wash one another's feet on Maundy Thursday.

## **Does it have to be feet?**

Some of us are unable to kneel to wash other people's feet. There are also people who are filled with dread and anxiety at the thought of someone touching their bare feet. Let's face it, foot washing is something from a different time and culture. Not to worry. The main point of this ritual is, in imitation of Jesus, to express our love for others through service.

With the coronavirus one thing that has been repeatedly communicated is our need for clean hands. Washing one another's hands with soap and water

and then drying them is a beautiful way to follow Jesus' example. So if foot washing is not for you, then consider hand washing instead. It would be best to do this over the sink with running water and plenty of soap.

### **What if I am Alone at this time?**

If you are alone at this time, I would encourage you to make this an extended time of prayer. Open your Bible to John 13. Dim the lights. Light some candles if you have them. Get a large bowl with a pitcher of warm water and a towel. When the Gospel is read, read it through slowly several times to enter the scene. When it comes time in the liturgy to wash feet, slowly pour the water into the bowl. Prayerfully, with a holy imagination, enter the scene in the Upper room. Imagine the smells of the food being prepared. The sound of Jesus pouring water. The feel of the towel. Then tell Jesus you desire to be washed by him and then slowly wash your own feet/hands. Being alone provides a wonderful opportunity to be ministered to by Jesus in an intimate way.

## **A Liturgy for Maundy Thursday**

### **The Greeting**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
the love of God,  
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit  
be with you  
**and also with you.**

### **Prayers of Penitence**

Our Lord Jesus Christ says:  
'If you love me, keep my commandments.'  
'Unless I wash you, you have no part in me.'  
'Let us confess to almighty God our sins against his love,  
and ask him to cleanse us.

*Silence is kept.*

Have mercy on us, O God,  
in your great goodness;  
according to the abundance of your compassion  
blot out our offences. Lord, have mercy.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

Against you only have we sinned  
and done what is evil in your sight.  
Christ, have mercy.  
**Christ, have mercy.**

Purge us from our sin and we shall be clean;  
wash us and we shall be whiter than snow.  
Lord, have mercy.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

May the Father forgive *us* by the death of his Son  
and strengthen *us* to live in the power of the Spirit  
all *our* days.  
**Amen.**

**Holy God,  
holy and mighty  
holy and immortal,  
have mercy upon us.**

## **The Collect**

Let us pray that we may love one another as Christ has loved us.  
**God our Father,**

**you have invited us to share in your love through the life of your Son Jesus and by the power of your Holy Spirit. May your love be so grafted in our hearts that we might embody your self-giving love every day. Give us grace to follow the example of Jesus, strengthen and nourish us by your presence, inspire us that we might bring glory to your name. Amen.**

## **The Liturgy of the Word**

### **Gospel Reading**

*This acclamation may herald the Gospel reading*

Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.  
I give you a new commandment, says the Lord:  
Love one another as I have loved you.  
**Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.**

*When the Gospel is announced the reader says*

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.  
**Glory to you, O Lord.**

*John 13.1-17, 31b-35 is read*

This is the Gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise to you, O Christ.**

### **A Time for Meditation or Discussion**

### **Preparation for the Washing of Feet/Hands**

***God is love, and where true love is, God himself is there.***

Here in Christ we gather, love of Christ our calling;  
Christ, our love, is with us, gladness be his greeting;  
let us all revere and love him, God eternal.  
Loving him, let each love Christ in everyone.

***God is love, and where true love is, God himself is there.***

When we Christians gather, members of one Body,  
let there be in us no discord, but one spirit;  
banished now be anger, strife and every quarrel.  
Christ our God be present always here among us.

***God is love, and where true love is, God himself is there.***

Grant us love's fulfilment, joy with all the blessed  
when we see your face, O Saviour, in its glory;  
shine on us, O purest Light of all creation,  
be our bliss while endless ages sing your praises.

***God is love, and where true love is, God himself is there.***

*James Quinn SJ*

Families Wash one another Hands or Feet

*The washing of feet may end with this prayer*

**Lord Jesus Christ, you have taught us  
that what we do for the least of our brothers and sisters  
we do also for you: give us the will to be the servant of others as  
you were the servant of all, and gave up your life and died for us,  
but are alive and reign, now and for ever. Amen.**

### **Prayers of Intercession**

In the power of the Spirit let us pray to the Father  
through Christ the saviour of the world.

Father, on this, the night he was betrayed,  
your Son Jesus Christ washed his disciples' feet.  
We commit ourselves to follow his example of love and service.  
Lord, hear us  
**and humble us.**

On this night, he prayed for his disciples to be one.  
We pray for the unity of your Church.  
Lord, hear us  
**and unite us.**

On this night, he prayed for those who were to believe through his  
disciples' message.  
We pray for the mission of your Church.  
Lord, hear us  
**and renew our zeal.**

On this night, he commanded his disciples to love,  
but suffered rejection himself.

We pray for the rejected and unloved.

Lord, hear us

**and fill us with your love.**

On this night, he reminded his disciples

that if the world hated them it hated him first.

We pray for those who are persecuted for their faith.

Lord, hear us

**and give us your peace.**

On this night, he accepted the cup of death

and looked forward to the new wine of the kingdom.

We remember those who have died in the peace of Christ.

Lord, hear us

*All* **and welcome all your children into paradise.**

## **The Peace**

Jesus says: 'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.

Do not let your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.'

The peace of the Lord be always with you

*All* **and also with you.**

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

## **The Lord's Prayer**