

MAUNDY THURSDAY

A home reflection: foot washing

“A NEW COMMAND I GIVE YOU: LOVE ONE ANOTHER. AS I HAVE LOVED YOU, SO YOU MUST LOVE ONE ANOTHER. BY THIS EVERYONE WILL KNOW THAT YOU ARE MY DISCIPLES, IF YOU LOVE ONE ANOTHER.”

- JOHN 13: 34-35



Maximino Cerezo Barredo

Maundy Thursday

Is the day in the church calendar we remember Jesus washing the disciples' feet and giving them a new command "Love others as I have loved you"—it's the moment we remember the God of the universe getting down on hands and knees and serving those around us.

Gospel Contemplation:

About 500 years ago a man name Ignatius had a near-death experience and while on his death bed had a profound moment of connection with Jesus. He did not die and so throughout the rest

of his life he thought deeply about how people could experience God in this profound way. He wanted to help others deepen their spiritual life with God and to have knowledge and awareness of Jesus' presence.

Gospel Contemplation is one of the ways he came up with. This is a way of experiencing the gospel story in our imaginations and through our senses. We imagine ourselves in the story and in spend time in Jesus' presence. It is appropriate for every age, and so while this might be a new experience for many of you— recognize our imaginations have been given to us by God and God uses them to speak to us too.

If you have kids, we invite you to do it with them as well.

A GUIDE

Instructions:

1. Find a candle, a quiet place and settle yourself.
2. Watch the short meditation led by Dayna on YouTube.
You can find the script she uses below if you don't have access to YouTube.

Time to Respond: *(Feel free to do one or all of these)*

1. If you live with others and everyone is well, we invite you to sit in a circle and each was the feet of the person next to you. After you are finished ask these questions:
 - a. *What did you notice when you washed someone's feet and why?*
 - b. *What did you notice when someone washed your feet and why?*
 - c. *When else have you noticed those feelings?*
 - d. *How might those things you noticed be similar to the way you would feel if God invited you to love and serve others?*
2. Listen to the three songs in the playlist
 - a. *How might you be able to follow Christ's model of serving and loving others in this moment in history with the gifts you've been given?*
3. Watch the animated Jesus Story Book Bible clip in the playlist

4. Draw a picture or create some art of Jesus washing feet or the way you would like to respond to this story.
5. Read Phil 2:1-11

GOSPEL CONTEMPLATION SCRIPT

Read John 13: 1-17

Get comfortable. Invite you to close your eyes. Breathe deeply. In and out, in and out.

Pray: Jesus: we invite you to speak to us in this time.

Go back through time and space. Imagine yourself as Peter, at a dinner to celebrate the Passover, with the rest of the disciples and Jesus. You've just come in and sat down. Imagine the smells, imagine yourself sitting next to the disciple you admired the most. *Consider your own emotional state: are you tired, hungry, distracted? Notice these things as you wait for the meal. (Pause)*

Jesus suddenly gets up, he takes off his cloak. And he ties a soft linen towel around his waist. Hear the gurgling of the clear water being poured into a bowl. Jesus squats down onto the wooden floor. Gently takes the foot of Thomas, drops it into the cool water dirtying the water. Jesus pours the water over Thomas' foot, and picks up the soft linen towel to pat Thomas' foot dry.

Jesus hoists himself up and then squats in front of Andrew and begins again—gently taking the foot, you hear the splash of water, see the patting dry of Andrew's foot. Jesus groans as he gets up and then squats in front of the next disciple.

What do you notice as you realize Jesus is doing this to each of your friends? What emotions are in you? What is your attitude? (Pause)

You look down and you have dust caked in every wrinkle. A bit of mud dried onto your big toe. Your heels are cracked.

And suddenly, Jesus is in front of you, he squats down. And you say:

“Lord, are you going to wash my feet?”

When you hear yourself say this, is your voice meek? Does it come out soft, as though a whisper? Full of doubt? Or is it strong, and defiant? As though the Lord shouldn't be doing such things? Or is it surprised? Surprised that you are included? Surprised that you weren't forgotten? (Pause)

Jesus looks straight into your eyes—saying,

“You do not understand now what I am doing but later you will understand.”

You say: “You will never wash my feet!”

What is keeping you from wanting him that close? why are you denying this intimacy? (Pause)

Jesus tenderly looks up again and says to you:

“Unless I wash you, you have no share with me.”

As Jesus willingly and lovingly takes your feet anyway, he does what you really need-- what actually matters. What do you sense that is? (Pause)

You quickly say: Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!

Do you truly mean these words? (Pause)

“One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean.”

You extend your foot. You feel Jesus' hands holding your heel. And the sudden coolness of the water. Jesus looks up at you, takes your dripping feet out of the water and pats them dry with the soft linen towel.

What has this act by Jesus communicated to you? Do you feel different than you did before— when you were waiting and watching?

Jesus stands up and moves to the person sitting next to you. You are left there, in your seat, with your thoughts and feelings from your personal encounter with Jesus.

Name them. How are you feeling? What are you thinking? What do you want to do? (Pause)

Jesus finishes with the last person at the table.
He throws out the water.
Unties the towel.
Puts on his cloak.
Sits down at the table.

He takes some time to look around the expressions of those who are there.
He says: "Do you understand what I just did for you?"
You address me as 'Teacher' and 'Lord,'
and fittingly enough, for that is what I am.
But if I washed your feet—I who am Teacher and Lord—
then you must wash each other's feet.
As I have done, so you must do."

*What do you want to thank Christ for in this moment?
And how can you be like he just was, serving all of you? (Pause)*

The scene begins to fade. It is time to come back to this space. Wiggle our toes. Now, spend some time in reflection:

Is there a part of the story that was particularly clear? A response that was particularly intense?

Speak to the Lord in an open way—say what is on your mind and allow the Lord to speak to you. How did the story help you experience Jesus?