

## Reflection Maundy Thursday year A 2023

Being reminded of the first Passover and how God freed the Hebrews in Egypt with the blood of a lamb is a dramatic way to begin this Holy Triduum. It does, however, make clear that it is through blood, the blood of Jesus offering himself on the cross that sets us free from an eternal death!

As we gather with the disciples for the Passover meal with Jesus, there is apprehension in the air because the disciples did not want to return to Jerusalem for fear of the Jewish leaders. They came to support Jesus and, tonight, we join them to be a support for Jesus too. Much was said at that Passover meal, an account of which is to be found in St John's Gospel, for John was present throughout and even followed Jesus into the court of the Sanhedrin, after his arrest. Tonight however, we focus not so much on the words but on the action of Jesus and on one of the greatest models of service that Jesus shares with us.

The washing of the feet expresses both the deep love and tremendous care that Jesus had, not only for his disciples but for us all... This is no belittling experience. It expresses the honour and dignity Jesus saw in his disciples and at the same time the deep honour and all embracing dignity of Jesus himself. In other words, the washing of the feet is an exaltation of Jesus and of his goodness. It is through this kind of service that the love of God is made real as it carries with it the presence of the divine.

Serving with honour and dignity always comes with a divine presence which we call grace, the gentle power of God. True service is like washing feet with the gentle hands of Jesus and is offered with the same honour and dignity.

This service will free the world from injustice, from abuse and cruelty, the misuse of power, and defeat the evils of war, not guns, bombs and soldiers. Gentle hands expressing honour and dignity will bring the healing we need.

Thank you, Jesus, for showing us the way!