



Is There Someone Who's Unpleasant to Serve?

Foot washing with Jesus

Prepare: Read John 13:1-15



Our intimacy with Jesus grows when we wash the feet of others. Jesus washed the feet of His disciples, not because their feet were dirty, nor were they too lazy to take care of their own hygiene, and also not because He wanted them to know that He was a servant who would make life easy for them. Rather, He gave them (and us) a model to imitate.

On Holy Thursday in 2002, Pope John Paul II said: "Participation in the Lord's Mass cannot be separated from the duty to love one's neighbor. Every time we partake of the Eucharist, we also express our 'Amen' before the Body and Blood of the Lord," he said. "Thus we commit ourselves to do what Christ did, 'to wash the feet' of brothers, being transformed into concrete and transparent images of the One who 'stripped himself and assumed the condition of a slave.' "

And he added: "Love is the most precious legacy that He leaves to those He calls to follow Him."

Have you washed anyone's feet lately? Maybe you haven't literally soaped up a friend's smelly feet as a sign of your unconditional love and service, but how have you given of yourself in a foot-washing way?

To wash the feet of others is to love them even when they don't deserve your love.

To wash the feet of others is to do good to them even if they don't return the favor.

To wash the feet of others is to consider their needs as important as your own.

To wash the feet of others is to forgive them even if they don't say they're sorry.

To wash the feet of others is to serve them even when the task is unpleasant.

To wash the feet of others is to let them know you care when they feel downtrodden or burdened.

To wash the feet of others is to be generous with what you have to give.

To wash the feet of others is to turn the cheek instead of retaliating when you are treated unfairly.

To wash the feet of others is to make adjustments in your plans when their need is greater than yours.

To wash the feet of others is to serve them with humility.

Notice Jesus' posture when He washed His disciples' feet. He knelt down to gently wash the dirt and soothe their tiredness. We kneel before Jesus when we pray by the Tabernacle and during the Consecration of the Eucharist to show Him deep respect.

Imagine Jesus kneeling in front of you, lowering Himself to the level of your feet and tenderly ministering to your needs. He is in fact doing this every day! And He is asking you to go and do likewise: Be the hands of Jesus that wash the feet of the people He has placed in your life.

By serving others when the task is unpleasant and lowly, we grow in humility. And we understand more fully what Jesus did for us 2000 years ago and what He is doing for us right now.