

Reflection for Maundy Thursday

Today we remember the last day that Jesus spent with his disciples - later on Maundy Thursday Jesus was arrested and the next day he will be crucified.



John's gospel tells us that Jesus was eating a meal with his friends, his disciples in Jerusalem. But then he left the meal to tie a towel round his waist and started to wash their feet - how strange - and Simon Peter asked him why? Jesus tells him he won't yet understand.

Traditionally feet would be washed by a servant before people came into a house - roads in those days were rough and dirty and people wore sandals and would be grateful for their feet to be refreshed.

There are many thoughts as to why Jesus did this - he was humble and came to be a servant - and this act showed that humility, care and servanthood very clearly

But this gospel also tells us this - that Jesus 'Having loved his own who were in the world, loved them to the end'

So, washing the feet of the disciples was a final loving act for the people that had been with him to this time - he who was the Messiah, the Son of God, the Christ, took the role of a servant to care for the people he loved so much.

He was demonstrating the love we are to have for one another - a love that is self-giving, a love that is practical, a love that puts us on our knees for others.

After washing his disciples feet he says to them "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". Jesus has shown them a new way of life and love that they are to follow.

Most Maundy Thursdays in our churches we too would wash the feet of those attending - it's a very practical but highly symbolic action, reminding us all of how we are all called to follow Christ in his love and care for others.

We will remember that we are all called to be servants - to kneel at the feet of our brothers and sisters in the world.

But we remember too that we are all called to receive his love and care. In all my many years of ministry I have found that many, many people find this difficult - "I'm not good enough" they say - "How could Jesus love me - I have so many faults" , "I'm not as good as others, I fail every day", "He died for everyone else, not for me"

To be fair I spent a lot of years thinking that of myself.

We hear words of judgement in our head - we don't always need others to judge us, we often do an amazing job ourselves!

As we think today about Jesus' very moving act of washing his disciples feet. We are called to remember that Jesus washed the feet of everyone, even those who were to abandon him, pretend not to know him and even betray him.

*Jesus' message of love and compassion was and is for **everyone**, however we might see ourselves. Jesus sees us through different eyes.*

Jesus sees us with eyes of love, compassion and care - we are all 'good enough' for him and he proved this by dying for each one of us.- what greater love could someone have for all people than being willing to lay down their life for us - which is exactly what Jesus did.

I pray that we can all accept the amazing love Jesus offers each one of us and that we then can love others as he has loved us, Amen.

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