

Footwashing Ceremony at Home

On the night of the Last Supper, Jesus demonstrated how we - His disciples - are to act towards one another and the world. He performed a pure act of love and service – and He calls us to do the same. We can shy away from this ritual – ashamed of our feet, uncomfortable. Allowing our feet to be washed, accepting that service, can be more difficult than being the washer. Let us overcome our hesitation tonight, and on this Holy Thursday, give those with whom we live the gift of love and service by washing each other's feet and allowing ours to be washed..



Preparation:

Before you begin, gather a pitcher full of warm water, bowl, towel, and lotion, and a candle. You may want to add bath salts or soap to the water.

The leader invites all to sit comfortably. If there are enough people in your family, you may want to sit in a circle.

The leader lights the candle.

Opening Prayer:

**O God of love, Your Son came to the table
To give us His commandment: love one another.**

**Touch our hearts with wonder
To see the Lord enwrapped in glory tie a towel around his waist,
The Master whom raging seas obey pour water into a servant's basin,
The one whom angels wait on kneel down to wash the disciple's feet.**

**As we enter these Three Days,
Cleanse us within
That we may keep the festival with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.**

**We ask this through your Son, the Christ, our Passover and Peace,
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
One God forever and ever. Amen.**

(adapted from Prayers for Sundays and Seasons, LTP, 1997)

Reading

If you haven't already, read John 13:1-15 or play Fr. Carl's reading and homily on Youtube:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCiKKNbTvoFPP5JhKkSDP1PQ>

After the Gospel reading and reflection, you may wish to play some music while you wash each other's feet. The leader may start. Take your time – this year there is no line! Wash feet carefully and lovingly. You may wish to anoint each other's feet with lotion. Make sure everyone gets a chance to wash and be washed.

Some appropriate songs for this time might be:

Basin and Towel by Michael Card <https://youtu.be/OsSILiatlTQ>

The Servant Song <https://youtu.be/MYpH3y4608E>

Jesu, Jesu <https://youtu.be/tjBZd4MaMP8>

Reflection and Discussion:

How was it to have your feet washed?

What was the experience of washing another's feet like?

What are the many ways we “wash each other's feet”?

Reading: from *The Long Loneliness* by Dorothy Day

“The most significant thing about Catholic Worker is poverty, some say.

The most significant thing is community, others say. We are not alone any more.

But the final word is love. At times it has been, in the words of Father Zossima, a harsh and dreadful thing, and our very faith in love has been tried through fire.

We cannot love God unless we love each other, and to love we must know each other. We know Him in the breaking of the bread, and we know each other in the breaking of the bread, and we are not alone any more. Heaven is a banquet and life is a banquet, too, even with a crust, where there is companionship.

We have all known the long loneliness and we have learned that the only solution is love and that love comes through community.”

Refrain: Jesu, Jesu, fill us with your love; show us how to serve the neighbors we have from you.

At this point, you may want to proceed to the bread breaking ritual, or close with this or another prayer.

Closing Prayer: A Covenant Psalm

All **Wherever you go, I will go.
I will love and serve beside you.
And, together we will go with God.**

Voice Blessed be God who helps us transcend
into what must be said
and what must be heard
in the Spirit-charged intensity
of a changing world rooted in tradition and hope.

All **Wherever you stay, I will stay,
content and sure around you.
Your hopes will be the source of my hope
And together we will hope in God.**



Voice Blessed be God who unites two streams
to form one active current together,
enriching the lives of all on whom
our fullness overflows.

All **Wherever you are, I will be
loving and serving beside you.
Respecting and living within our differences,
uniting and serving within our sameness.
Your dreams will be my energy
and our future will be with God.**

Leader Holy One... Wherever you go, we will go.
Wherever You Are, there we will be.
Your Love is all-encompassing
and that is enough for us. **Amen.**

(Adaptation from "A Covenant Prayer" and "A Psalm of Trust".
Both from WomanWitness, by Miriam Therese Winter; Crossroad)