



Wednesday Prayer

Holy Week and the Easter Promise

Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. John 13:1-5

I eagerly participate in Maundy Thursday's washing of the feet. Jesus washing the disciples' feet, an act of not only the most humble and gracious love, was also an act of humiliation in that time. Jesus says, *"You do not know what I am doing, but later you will understand."* In her commentary on this Gospel, Jennifer Garcia Bashaw reflects, "When Jesus washes his disciples' feet, he is not just preparing followers for his death, he is demonstrating a new way to live in a corrosive, power-hungry world." Washing of the feet would have been performed by lowly female servants, and here was Jesus, showing them the love of Christ through what the disciples viewed as a humiliating act for Jesus.

This past week, I spent time with parents and youth who had recently gone through our Safe and Healthy Relationships Guide. They were filming clips for the upcoming LSS Benefit for Youth, sharing how their experience with the sessions will help them stay clear of sexual exploitation and navigate online challenges and dangers that come their way. One of the adults said, "I've been trying to wrap my head around why anyone would do this to children. Why?" My first thought was "I don't know" because truly I don't want to believe there is this type of evil in our world. But my answer came out as "power and control." In contrast, Jesus was trying to show us a new way to act in the world, a way that's never going to be easy. Washing one another's feet in love – working together to reverse the evils in the world.

But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.' This is my message for you." So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Matthew 28:5-8

The Easter promise comes to us – Jesus has defeated earthly power and control to be with us. Reject fear, rejoice, and live into the good news! **Amen.**

Written by Joy McElroy, Cherish All Children Executive Director.