

HOLY THURSDAY YEAR A SERVICE TO OTHERS: 6th April 2023

The mass of the Lords Supper marks the beginning of Triduum, three days before the Easter; three important elements are key in today's liturgy namely: the institution of Eucharist, the Priesthood and Service.

Today's gospel, the scripture tells us that before meal, Jesus got up from the table, removed His garment and taking a towel wrapped it round His waist. He poured water into a basin and began to wash His disciples' feet. By washing their feet before meals, Christ teaches souls how pure they must be before receiving Him in the Holy Communion. He first made them real tabernacles, sanctuaries and temples worthy of His dwelling so that He and in fact, the adorable Holy Trinity would come and dwell in them (Exo 25:8). He also wished to remind those who would have the misfortune to sin that they can always recover their innocence through the washing of the sacrament of penance.

The washing of the disciples' feet is a great mystery. It was an expression of great humility and service. The Lord of the world kneels at the feet of fishermen. The creator, to whom the celestial powers bend the knee, washes the feet He had made, and on bended knee wipes off the dust and mud on their feet. He washes also the feet of His betrayer. We are also called to treat our enemies with more patience, concern and love. Peter who had recognized Him at the transfiguration as God would not agree to have his feet washed, but Jesus imposes it on him.

The washing of the disciples' feet by Jesus also has implications for service. After Jesus had washed His disciples' feet, He said to them:

Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord -- and you are right, for that is what I am. So, if I, your Lord and Teacher,

I have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you (John 13:12-15).

Jesus establishes a close link between his washing of the disciples' feet and the disciples washing the feet of others. By washing the feet of the disciples Jesus calls us to serve one another, to be charitable to one another. Whatever act of love or kindness we show to one another, we show it to Him. Jesus is present in every one of us. He says in the gospel of Matthew, "Whatever you do to the least of my brethren, you do it unto me" (Mt 25:40). The final judgment would be based on how much charity and service we have shown one another and not by how much piety we have practiced; by washing the disciples' feet, Jesus teaches that Christianity is a religion to be realized in practice not a religion of the book.

Peace,

Fr. Jingbe Simon