

The call to service



John 13:1-5

It was before the festival of the Passover, and Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to pass from this world to the Father. He had always loved those who were his in the world, but now he showed how perfect his love was.

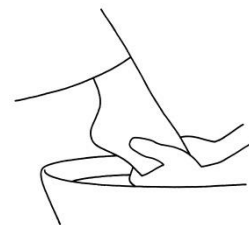
They were at supper, and the devil had already put it into the mind of Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray him. Jesus knew that the Father had put everything into his hands, and that he had come from God and was returning to God, and he got up from the table, removed his outer garment and, taking a towel, wrapped it round his waist; he then poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel he was wearing.



Reflection (an extract from a reflection by a Benedictine monk)

Washing feet is a very menial task, a sign of the host welcoming a guest; a sign of the recognition that you are important to me. You are important because of who you are, not because of what you have done for me; not because you are a sinner or a saint, but because in you there is the unique presence of God. Service is at the heart of the Christian Gospel. "My service" Jesus was saying, "is to die and to rise and to give new life. Your service is to go forward and wash people's feet to show that it is love that really counts." My feet are my way to God, I walk the path to God; my feet are that part of my anatomy which enables me to move. They are the way to love. We are all pilgrims on the way. But which feet are we to wash?

- The feet that have never walked; the feet of people who have never had the opportunity of experiencing the walk in any other way than "being walked by someone else"?
- The feet that never wore shoes; that are so poor that they haven't got shoes?
- The feet that are always shackled; the feet that have been put in prison?
- The feet of those who are so talented; who use those feet in a magical way?
- The feet that give pain as we get older?
- The feet crushed in accidents; feet that are lost through no fault of our own?
- The feet that spend hours training to run a marathon for charity?
- The feet that are blown off by landmines?
- The feet of those who have walked and have never found; the ones who doubt?
- The feet that have always taken the wrong turnings?
- The feet of strangers who have come to our churches?
- The feet that long to walk to Heaven?



Questions to ponder

- Who are the people who 'wash my feet'?
- Where does our community already serve by 'washing feet'?
- How can we wash feet for those who never make it to the 'Upper Room'?
- What can I/we do practically to wash feet – in the here and now?



Concluding prayer

Let us pray. Loving Lord, you call us and challenge us to service. Give us humble hearts that care, gentle hands that reach out and open eyes and ears that recognise opportunities to serve your people. We make this prayer in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

