

Notes from the Liturgist...

Do this in **Remembrance** of Me

(Holy Thursday: The Lord's Supper)

From this week through the following weeks on this Lenten Season I am going to share with you about the Easter Triduum: Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday (Easter Vigil).

But for this weekend, I mainly focus on the Lord's Supper. Holy Thursday is the beginning of the Easter Triduum, where we are invited as we celebrate the Lord's Supper to enter a spiritual journey with Christ from his passion and death to His resurrection

On this great event, the readings, particularly the Gospel, provide us two significant points of reflection, namely the Washing of the Feet and the Institution of the Eucharist. This is one of the greatest celebration of the Catholic Church because Holy Thursday celebrates the Institution of the Eucharist, the true body and blood of Jesus Christ, and the institution of the priesthood.

At the Last Supper we heard that Jesus got up from the table, took towel and basin washed the feet of the apostles. By this gesture of Jesus, He highlighted one of the conditions of following him – the importance of service. After the washing of the feet of his apostles, he said: "I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, so you should also do." What does this mean to us? Jesus was calling us to share in spreading his gospel by giving ourselves completely to his way of life.

Jesus encourages us to serve one another in love as the Lord has lovingly served us. We are challenged to humbly wash each other's feet, a service to others, because we can serve God best by helping one another. However, we should always remember that there is nothing about our call to service, that does not demand effort. In the passion story during Palm Sunday and Good Friday we hear about Peter's failure of denying Jesus. But you know what is the good news? Peter came to know God's grace through failure. Often failure can be the finger of God pointing the way, awakening within us an awareness of our own helplessness. It restored Peter's confidence, gave him the strength to renew his faith and into the spreading of the gospel. To be a person committed to service requires courage, because it is never easy to do what is right when it means we have to go against popular values. Our life work is meant to be of loving service for the glory of God. In as much as Christ lived what he preached, so too we should do the same. All of us can find some role where we can be helpful to others. We are presented with daily opportunities to help the elderly, to listen to bereaved neighbors, and to give human contact to the lonely. In a relationship, whether at home or in our work place, in leading the way, we should always remember that authority as we exercise it in some shape or form is not for controlling of people but for the proper guidance of the community. Rather, it is rooted in the importance of service and availability – for this is a reflection of the life of Jesus in our own particular circumstances.



In essence, our life of service is actually at the heart of the Last Supper that we commemorate on Holy Thursday – the Institution of the Eucharist. At the Eucharist, we are blessed because Jesus gifted us with a daily celebration in which we experience Jesus, receive in Holy Communion and live out his call “to do this in his memory.” The bread offered, broken and shared as well as the cup of sacrifice we drink should be our life in memorial of Jesus. Our life then should be offered, broken and shared as living sacrifice in testimony and witness to the great love of Christ for us. It is only in this sense that Eucharist lived is our daily “foot washing” for others.