

MAUNDY THURSDAY

April 9, 2020 / At Home Service

— *Part One: Pray and Share a Meal* —

OPENING CALL TO WORSHIP

Come, people of God,
let us offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving,
and lift up his name in the presence of his people.
For God is gracious and merciful.
God is full of compassion and love.
Let us worship God.

You may also choose to begin your time with a prayer thanking God for God's presence, love, and gifts. Ask the Holy Spirit to direct your time together. One or more people may choose to pray during this time. The host can close this time of prayer.

DINNER

Now it's time to eat. As you share a meal together, reflect on the simple and yet profound gifts that you are enjoying. The gift of good food to nourish your body and the gift of companionship and friendship to nourish your soul and all in union with God. It is through these simple means that God intended to move through the world.

CONVERSATION STARTERS

Make time during dinner to go around the room and answer some questions about how you, your friend, spouse or family have experienced the presence of Christ this Lenten season. The virus has, in many ways, forced us to observe Lenten practices of fasting from busyness.

Questions:

What ways have you experienced God in your life during this Lenten season?

Are there particular ways you are hoping for God to move in your life?

Can you think of a time when you have witnessed or experienced meaningful acts of service and compassion this season?

How have you grown as a family? Individually?

What do you miss? What are you grateful for in this time?

— *Part Two: Reading the Gospel Together* —

INTRODUCTION

Take a moment to center your hearts in prayer. When ready, go around the room, taking turns reading each paragraph from the Book of John.

READING: JOHN 13: 1–17

— *Part Three: Reflect Together* —

MEDITATION

Move into a time of silent prayer. Slowly look back over the Gospel Reading. If children are involved who cannot read on their own, this may be a good time to retell the story to make sure they grasp what is happening.

REFLECTION

After a few minutes of silence, the host can read this paragraph aloud.

In washing the disciples' feet, Jesus performs an act of service that would have been reserved for the lowest of servants in that culture. Yet, just before he does this, the story records that Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God.

DISCUSSION

Work through these reflection questions as a group. Allow for everyone in the room to share at least once.

What line or phrase or moment stands out to you? Why?

Why do you think it is important that this is mentioned just before Jesus washes His disciples' feet?

Why do you think Peter is resistant to Jesus washing his feet?

What do you think Jesus is referring to when he says, you do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand?

John says at the beginning of his Gospel that Jesus is making God known to us. What does this story reveal to us about the nature of God in Christ?

— *Part Four: Serve One Another* —

INTRODUCTION

Jesus does not simply perform this incredible act of service to show His disciples the inverse nature of how things work in the Kingdom of God compared to the rest of the world. He also instructs them to join in. He washes their feet and instructs them to wash one another's feet.

We are also Jesus' disciples and invited to adopt this paradigm of loving service towards one another and towards our world.

WASHING FEET (Optional)

Begin with silent prayer. If you are comfortable doing so, remove your shoes and socks. One by one, sit in a chair in front of a basin of water. One person will wash with water and dry with a towel. Perhaps then the one who was washed can wash the next person, and so on. Once everyone's feet have been washed, sit together for few moments of silent reflection. When ready, you can ask the following to all:

How did it feel to wash another's feet?

How did it feel to have your feet washed?

CLOSING PRAYER

O Jesus, in this Holy Week, you prayed that we would love one another as you have loved us. Tonight we have tried to practice what you have taught us. Let the love, joy and humility we have known here with our families continue to bless us. Encourage us to share this blessing with the world you love, and gave your life for. May the peace we feel together now, point us toward the hope of Easter morning. And all God's people said, amen.

BENEDICTION

In the coming days, look for tangible ways to show the love of Jesus to your family, your loved ones, and yourself. Go in peace.