



## Finding Jesus in dirty feet

### Holy Thursday Mass of the Lord's Supper

Prepare: Read John 13:1-15

Jesus did not come into this world to be served, although he is God and surely deserves it. He came to serve. He came to serve *you*. And through you, he wants to serve everyone you know.

After inviting us to sit back and enjoy being served by our wonderful God, Jesus says in today's Gospel passage: "I have given you a model to follow – what I have done for you, you should also do." His foot-washing ceremony is a model of service.

His model is very uncomfortable. It means loving others so much that we do good deeds for them, even for the people we dislike, those whose feet are disgusting.

When we serve those who have not served us the way they should, we unite ourselves to Jesus by becoming Eucharist for them. What does it mean to "become Eucharist"?

First, we walk up to Christ in the communion line responsible for our own conversions, saying, "I am not worthy...", but after we receive the Eucharist, we return to our pews united to Christ. Communion means "with union."

United to Christ, we are now as much the Eucharist as he is. At the end of Mass, we're commissioned to go out and be Eucharist – be the real presence of Christ – in the world.

Years ago, God drove this point home to me. In a prayer meeting, I surprisingly found myself washing the feet of a priest who had betrayed his parishioners (and me and my family and

some friends) through alcoholism and lust. I tell you, his feet were ugly! But much uglier was his refusal to accept the truth about his addictions and sins.

What did the foot-washing accomplish? It made a clear statement about mercy.

And on a personal level, it gave me the opportunity to show him that I was willing to serve him if he was willing to accept it as part of a healing process. He wasn't, and eventually the bishop had to remove him, but the foot-washing ceremony healed me of

my own unwillingness to love unconditionally. Jesus washed *my* feet along with *my* heart. And I gained a much greater understanding of the love that Jesus has for me every time he washes my ugly feet (my sins).

Remember, though, that Jesus never gives up on anyone. Years later, he washed the feet of this priest with the gift of mercy through a redemptive time of earthly purgatory, which took the form of a painful disease that began in his feet and spread. As he endured pain that medications couldn't totally eliminate, he allowed the disease to purge him of his pride and his addictions. In this, he experienced Jesus embracing him with passionate love.



#### Personal Commitment:

To unite myself to Jesus, I will be Eucharist for others by serving \_\_\_\_ (Who? How?)