

Pastor Writes

Greetings to you all. Today is International Women's day as well as WFCS celebrating World Day of Prayer. The theme 'Service' is taken from St. John's Gospel chap 13: 1 -17 and focuses on Service. The WFCS is an arm of the Church which engages itself in Christian service. In today's gospel reading from St. John, Jesus shows the full extent of his love by serving them. Jesus had asked his disciples to prepare for the Passover meal which would be also his last supper or farewell meal. He was also fully aware that within a short period of time he would be crucified on the cross. His mission was soon to be accomplished. Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power and he had come from God and was returning to God. As the meal was in progress Jesus took off his outer clothing and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with a towel that was that wrapped around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, 'Lord are you going to wash my feet?' Jesus replied, 'You don't realize what I am doing but later you will understand.' Peter was alarmed that a master should wash his servant's feet, and so tells Jesus, 'you should never wash my feet'. Jesus answered, 'Unless I wash you, you have not part with me.' Simon Peter then said, 'not just my feet, but my head and hands as well.' Jesus answered, 'Those who had a bath, need only to wash their feet. Their whole body is clean and you are clean though not everyone of you.' Jesus knew that Judas was going to betray him shortly that is why he said that everyone was not clean.

When he had finished washing their feet he put on his clothes and returned to his place. He then asked them, 'do you understand what I have done for you?' 'You call me teacher and Lord, and rightly so for that is what I am. Now that your Lord and teacher have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet.' Jesus was telling them that the call to follow Jesus was a call to serve others in humanity. Our service to others must rise out of our love for God. Jesus himself has set us the greatest example of service. Washing the feet of a stranger was the job of the lowest and the meanest slave. In other words Jesus is asking us to forget about our pride and arrogance and to humble ourselves and become like the lowliest of servants to serve others.

Jesus concludes by saying that he has set an example for the disciples and that they should do as he had done to them. Jesus reminds them that no servant is greater than his master nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. He challenges them to walk in the way of service.

Mother Teresa was the epitome of service. She loved the unloved and cared for the destitute and the dying, for whom there was no one. When questioned about her service, she always answered that she saw Jesus in every single person and therefore cared for them as she would for Jesus. It was her love for God that motivated her service rather than for any other motive.

May we be challenged by Christ's call to serve others in humility and by example like Mother Teresa who calls us to serve sacrificially. May God help each of us to serve selflessly.

Shalom

Paul Swarup