

**ST PAUL (RONDEBOSCH)**

**MAUNDY THURSDAY**

**9 APRIL 2020**

**READINGS: EXODUS 12:1-14// PSALM 116:1-2, 12-18//  
1 CORINTHIANS 11:23-26// JOHN 13:1-17, 31B-35**

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*Prayer*

*Lord Jesus by washing the feet of your disciples you taught us to serve one another  
Give courage to all who serve others at much cost to themselves AMEN*

*Some notes taken from our Lectionary Advent 2019- December 2020*

*“The Triduum (is a Latin word meaning three days) and is often referred to as The Three Great days- Maundy Thursday-Good Friday and the Easter Vigil. As we observe the Triduum we enter into the Paschal Mystery in which the passion –death-resurrection of Jesus Christ saves and redeems us.*

*The Triduum is therefore a single, unitary celebration of the whole Paschal Mystery and this unity is clearly shown in the structure of the services. There is a greeting at the start of the Maundy Thursday Eucharist “**The Lord be with you** but there will be no dismissal (at the end of the service), we will go out in silence. There will be no formal beginning or dismissal at the Good Friday Three Hour Devotion and no greeting at the service of Light that starts the Great Easter Vigil on Sunday morning. It is only at the end of the Vigil Service that the congregation join in the joyful dismissal that sends people out to love and serve the Lord with a great cry of “Alleluia Alleluia”*

*In these services we gather together to celebrate the complete drama of salvation into which we are invited. It is a gathering (on Maundy Thursday) that celebrates the new commandment to love and serve one another revealed by a Lord who washes the feet of the disciples, including Judas who betrayed him, and Peter who denied him, all played out in the context of the Passover , a joyful celebration of the liberation of the people of God from the oppression of slavery in Egypt, Then we have a gathering of the people of God at the cross(on Good Friday) as those who know the truth of the victory of our Lord over darkness, sin and rejection, And then a gathering of the people who join together to celebrate the resurrection of the Lord as those who have kept watch through his passion and greet him with joy on Easter morning.”*

So this three day journey takes us from the upper room, to the foot of the cross, to the tomb and the resurrection.

*(Lectionary notes –ACSA 2019-2020)*

## Let us turn to our Gospel reading

In John 13 v 1 and 2 we read ***“It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to his “Father” Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the extent of his love” The evening meal was being served”***

All of us have been in a situation where it is hard to say goodbye. We have all been in those situations where we have had to say goodbye to parents as we have moved away, goodbye to children as they have grown up, or goodbye to a dying loved one. If you have been in that situation, you will never forget the mood, the feeling of what happened at the last moment before you left or they left you. You want to say something significant to each other. You may forget the actual words, but you will never forget the moment, the significance of that last time together.

Well, such was the mood of the last supper of Jesus, the last night that Jesus shared a meal and conversation and friendship with his disciples. For three full years, these twelve men had learned to live and love each other. They had been together night and day enjoyed meals together witnessed Jesus’ miracles and healings. Jesus had trained them for three years to be his disciples.

But now Jesus knew the hour has come. His public ministry—teaching, healing, miracles—is done. He knows He is going back from where he came.

So what do we do when our time is at hand? We keep ourselves busy with many things so as not to face what is to be. Or we gather those whom we love and take the time to say what needs to be said.

**(It reminds us of the 26 March 2020 when the Lockdown of our country was implemented ----we were not going to see our family and friends for 21 days --- how did we feel—it is now 14 days later--- how do you feel now)**

***I want us to reflect on three things that Jesus did that night***

\***FIRSTLY** Jesus gathered those whom he loved –his disciples and he shared **a last meal** with them

Although John does not call this gathering around the table a Passover meal nor does he include the words of the Eucharistic Institution (as in the Synoptic Gospels). However this event took place within the Passover celebration because in v 1 we read “it was just before the Passover Feast.

In our Old Testament reading we heard a description of the Jewish Passover meal, the meal that commemorated and celebrated the most important event in the history of Israel, her exodus from the land of Egypt. It was in the exodus event that the Jews came to know God Yahweh as their personal Savior.

Jesus knew well that that while he was eating this meal, others were planning his death and he realized that his death on the following day would replace the exodus event as the central act of God's love for his people. At his Last Supper, Jesus instituted a new Pascal meal that would perfect and fulfill this sacred meal of the old covenant. And he gave this meal to us as an eternal sign of his love and as a source of his saving grace and presence.

So whenever we partake in the Holy Eucharist we are reminded and we remember Jesus sacrificial death for us

In our New Testament reading 1 Corinthians 11:23 -24 we read "For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

And then **SECONDLY** in v 4 we read '*So he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing and wrapped a towel round his waist. After that he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciple's feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.*

This is a menial task, beneath his stature. In Jesus' time people wore sandals and the roads were dusty, washing feet was necessary, frequent and personal. People washed their own feet or a slave would be commanded to wash the feet of the guests as they arrived at someone's home. No free person would want to wash someone else's feet- to do so would be beyond one's dignity and self-respect, to be reduced to the status of a slave. Yet this is what Jesus does. He humbles himself and became a servant and washes the disciples' dusty, dirty, tired feet. He washes Peter's who protests. He washes Judas's who is silent. He knows Peter will fail him, deny even knowing him. He knows Judas will betray him, hand him over to be killed. And still he washes their feet. He knows the worst of them and loves them anyway.

*So on the night of his death, we are invited by Jesus to become servants like he was a servant. We are invited by Jesus to live a life of humble service to the needs of others, not thinking more of ourselves than others,*

**We have seen and heard of so many lovely things people have done to help the most vulnerable of our communities during this time of the Corona Virus pandemic,**

And THIRDLY in v John 13:34 and 35 we read “*A new commandment I give you. Love one another. As I have loved you so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples if you love one another*”

On this night Jesus sets an example for us to follow.

We are to love just as he has loved us. This is tough love. It is easy for us to love certain people our family and good friends. But it is difficult to love those whose values are different from ours.

It's hard to love those who disappoint us, it's hard to love the person who is always judging us, who makes us feel like we just don't measure up to their standards. It's hard to love the person who betrays us, who lies to us and who hurts us.

And yet Jesus commands us to love one another even when it is difficult, when it hurts, when we are angry, surely Jesus felt that and more when he took Judas' foot in his hand.

We have to set down those feelings for the sake of others. It isn't easy, we will fail sometimes. But we can do it because we are loved to the very end by the one who came to give up his life that we might know and live that kind of love.

## **CONCLUSION**

On this Maundy Thursday the message that we need to take away is to remember what Jesus was actually trying to teach his disciples in this “new” commandment “**IS TO LOVE**, but to love in the manner as to wash each other's feet. It is through acts of love that we are joined in a “new” relationship with God through Jesus Christ.” And with one another

**Love for one another has clearly been demonstrated during this time of the Corona Virus pandemic- Sacrificial love of our doctors, our nurses , medical staff, firefighters, those who worked so that we could buy and have the essential products to get through this 21 days those who works in shops, pharmacies etc. And today we thank and salute them for their unselfish sacrificial love.**

**Let us continue to show that love and humbleness when all of this is over, because this too shall pass.**

So my brothers and sisters “*A new commandment I give you. Love one another. As I have loved you so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples if you love one another. AMEN*

*Please watch the video clip*