

In these days of lockdown, of isolation of families from each other, children kissing grandparents through the glass of a front window, the sheer intimacy of the Gospel reading for today really came home to me.

Picture the scene. As they enter the upper room, disciples had been arguing among themselves as to who would be the greatest in the Kingdom. They take their places. Jesus, without a word, takes on the task none of them are prepared to do, the task of the lowest servant in the household, he washes their feet.

Think for a moment of cool water spilling over feet. Hands, soon to be nailed to a cross, gently washing, gently dries their feet. Paul writes to the Philippians:

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,  
who, though he was in the form of God,  
did not regard equality with God  
as something to be exploited,  
but emptied himself,  
taking the form of a slave,  
being born in human likeness. *Phil 2:5ff*

Emptied himself, taking the form of a slave.

In the quietness that follows, he calls them, as across time he calls us, to acts of gentle, self-emptying service, to one another, to friend and stranger. Emptying ourselves of empty pride, of self-centredness, we are drawn into a deeper understanding of what we are called to be in the world as members of the Body of Christ, the hands, the feet, the lips, the eyes of Christ in the world of today.

*Maunday Thursday – 2020*  
*YouTube service – Late Evening Office*

I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.