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St. Bartholomew’s Episcopal Church

Post Office Box 906 High Springs, Florida 32655

Maundy Thursday 2020

Grace peace and the love of our Lord Jesus Christ be with each of you!

Our Maundy Thursday service is found on page 274 in our Prayer Book. There are two Gospel readings to choose from John 13:1-15 and Luke 22:14-30. Take a moment to read both of these since I will touch on both of them briefly in this homily.

It is obvious that Luke is bringing to our attention the institution of the Holy Eucharist while John is highlighting the foot washing. Both of these take place at this Last Supper Jesus has with his disciples. The question one may have is why didn’t John include the Eucharist? If we go back to John chapter 6, particularly verses 53-58, I believe we can safely say that the John understood the institution. John’s emphasis is focusing on the humiliation of Christ and also the humiliation that Christians will face in their service to the Lord.

The conversation with Peter brings comfort to me when I often fail to see the spiritual message as I deal with worldly issues. Normally people would bathe before going to their neighbor’s house to eat, especially if it was a special event such as the Passover meal. Walking on dirt roads in sandaled feet the guests would be greeted by a servant at the door to wash their feet. Here the Lord, the Messiah, the Teacher gets down on the ground and accomplishes the servant’s duty. The high and mighty brought low. The Lord knew Judas would betray him and yet Jesus washed Judas’ feet also. Washing the feet of your enemy?

In the Maundy service we are reminded that as the Lord has done so should we take his example and do to others. We are reminded of the commandment, “Love one another as I have loved you.” John’s message in the last supper is the Lord’s lesson that we will be humbled in carrying out our love for others. Sacrifices come with being a servant. Love has to prevail even if it means getting down to your enemy’s feet and washing them! Judas had to have felt the Lord’s love run through him when Jesus washed his feet. Judas was committed, blinded by the demon’s hate, and there was no turning back. How sad!

I believe we must look at Maundy Thursday with three thoughts in mind. First is the lesson of being a good servant, in other words being obedient to the teachings and examples of Jesus. Second is to recognize the importance of being humble before God and others. God loves the broken and contrite heart. Third is to remember that in taking the Eucharist we come before the Lord to be renewed through our remembrance that he has sacrificed himself so that we can be forgiven and made clean before entering into the Grand Banquet awaiting us in God’s Kingdom. Amen.

Much love to all of my St. Bartholomew’s family and friends. fr lance+