

# Swaythling Parish – Easter 2020

## Maundy Thursday at Home

### Reading: John 13:1-17

*Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, 'Lord, are you going to wash my feet?' Jesus answered, 'You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand.' Peter said to him, 'You will never wash my feet.' Jesus answered, 'Unless I wash you, you have no share with me.' Simon Peter said to him, 'Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!' Jesus said to him, 'One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you.' For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, 'Not all of you are clean.'*

*After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, 'Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.'*

At his darkest hour Jesus understood that service and mutual dependency was vital. He was asking his disciples to humble themselves and allow him to wash their feet; and he was humbling himself in doing so.

Mutual dependency is something that is a vital part of life in these times. People who have never asked for help with anything are having to ask someone else to shop for them or to go out on their behalf. There are huge number of groups of people offering to help others. Schools, who normally have thier own systems and processes, needed to use volunteers

like us to help them get their food deliveries out. Even the Prime Minister of the country has had to rely on his deputy to take over. Sometimes that need to ask for help can lead to a sense of uselessness. People who are used to *doing* are having to learn *to be*; to be the reflectors, the guides, the praying people. People who are used to being, to reflecting, to praying, are having to learn to do.

*Reflect for a moment on this. Do we find it easy to ask for help? Do we value those who help us and support us? Give your sense of place over to God.*

Lord God whether our role is to do or to be in this time, help us to value our role and that of others.

Lord in your mercy  
**Hear Our Prayer**

### **Reading: Mark 14:10**

*Then Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, went to the chief priests in order to betray him to them.*

In church history, Judas is the pantomime villain. The baddy in the story. The one who betrays Jesus's love. Perhaps Judas played a role. He took a part in the story; one that needed to be played. Jesus needed a betrayer. There is Judas in us all, just as there is Jesus within us too, shadow and light. Judas may be a neat person to blame, but we all play a role in this story, and we are all loved by Jesus with all our shadows and light. Martyn Percy writes about this in the book *Darkness Yielding* and quotes a speculative poem by Peter De Rosa, with Jesus talking to "Judas".

Judas, if true love never ceases.  
How could you, my friend, have come to this  
To sell me for thirty pieces of silver,  
Betray me with a kiss?

Judas, remember what I taught you:  
Do not despair while dangling on that rope.  
It's because you sinned that I have sought you,  
I came to bring you hope.

Judas, let's pray and hang together,  
You on your halter, I upon my hill.  
Dear friend, even if you loved me never,  
You know I love you still.

*Peter de Rosa*

## **Prayers of Intercession**

On this night, Lord Jesus, you gave us the command to wash one another's feet. Give us generosity of spirit, so that we may meet each other at the point of need, and accept each other's ministry with grace.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

On this night, Lord Jesus, you gave us yourself, to be found and remembered in the bread and wine which, blessed by your grace, are our spiritual food and drink. Build us up into your Body, to witness to your love in the world. May we feed on you in our hearts, digest your power; let your life stream through our senses, and energize our thought. May we recall your presence thankfully, a constant savouring.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

On this night, Lord Jesus, you were betrayed, denied, deserted. Draw us to the foot of your cross, and keep us faithful.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

## **Prayer of Dismissal**

May the peace of the Lord go with you wherever he may send you  
May he guide you through the wilderness, protect you through the storm  
May he bring you home rejoicing: at the wonder he has shown you  
May he bring you home rejoicing: once again into our doors.