

HOMILY HOLY THURSDAY YRC 2019

There was a woman whose legs were badly injured in two car accidents. She was able to walk, but she was very unsteady. She was holding on to the pews as she walked to the front of the church to receive Communion. The look on her face seemed to say: “This is a struggle, but I am determined to do this myself.” Suddenly, someone nudged her from behind and said: “Will you help me walk to the front of the church to receive Communion?” The woman was blind so she could not see the struggle that the woman with the injured legs was having. The blind woman took her by the arm and they struggled to the altar together. The unsteady one became the eyes of the blind woman and the blind woman gave her stability. They received Communion together. Jesus healed the lame and made the blind see. This healing took place between the two women, the way Jesus frequently works in the world today. We are the hands and feet and eyes of Jesus in the world today.

The night before he died, Jesus gave us two great gifts. He gave us the Eucharist. In the Eucharist Jesus is present to us in a way that we can see and feel and taste. In the celebration of the Mass he brings us together as a community. This is incredibly important. No one receives the Eucharist alone. No matter how isolated you are in other areas of your life, you are not alone when you receive the Body and Blood of Christ. The Body and Blood of Christ is what brought the two women together so that Jesus could cure them. Coming together to receive the Body and Blood of Christ gives us a great opportunity. We can enter into community with the other people who are here. We are a family and we are responsible for one another.

Jesus also showed us how we are to love and serve one another. Jesus washed his disciples’ feet. That was truly a humbling experience. You have to remember. The people at that time pretty much walked where they were going and they walked on the same roads that the

animals walked on and left their droppings. Washing someone's feet was not a pleasant experience. It was certainly not something that a teacher or master would do. But Jesus, who was teacher and master did. And he washed the feet of Judas, who was about to betray him and Peter, who was about to deny that he knew him. That is how we are to love and serve one another.

We must strip ourselves of all of our pretensions and give ourselves to one another in mutual service. The two women in the story I told a minute ago could have been caught up in their own unfortunate situations. They could have become bitter and self absorbed, but Jesus brought them together and healed them. We need to find a place at the table for everyone. If Jesus gave Judas a place at the table, everyone belongs. Healing can take place at the table. And I want to conclude with a quote from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.: "Everybody can be great because everybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and verb agree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace, a soul generated by love."