

HOMILY HOLY THURSDAY 2017

Over the past few years, I believe that our Pope Francis has changed the face of the Catholic Church. Last year on Holy Thursday, Pope Francis washed the feet of a group of refugees in Italy, about 10 miles from Rome. Among them were Muslims, Hindus and Copts. Hundreds of refugees were outside trying to get a glimpse of the Pope. He said that gestures speak louder than words, and so they do. His gesture indicated in our diverse world of many religions and cultures, we all need to join together as brothers, and so we do. We need to love and serve one another.

In the Gospel reading today we see two gestures. First of all we see Jesus serving and washing the feet of his disciples. This gesture indicates that we are all brothers and want to live in peace. We also see Judas receiving money by Jesus' enemies to betray him. This is a gesture that indicates there are those who want blood rather than peace. In recent months we have seen multiple acts of terrorism, people who want blood rather than peace. But today we also have another gesture. Today on this Holy Thursday we have Catholics all over the world performing a ceremonial foot washing. Today, Catholics all over the world are performing a gesture that indicates that in our diversity we all want to live together in peace. Jesus tells us: "What I have done for you, you should also do." Jesus presents to us a proper way of living, and we must apply this to our political decisions. I am not sure how that will play out, but I know it is all about the love.

Today we celebrate the fact that Jesus gave us the Eucharist. At each Mass we make present today that event where Jesus sacrificed himself for the sins of all human kind, all human kind. He defeated hatred with love. It was a powerful act of love. No one should feel excluded from the love of this community. To be a Eucharistic people, we must wash the feet of others. I think we all have prejudices and preconceived notions about people who are different from us.

We must be very honest with ourselves and name them. When we see someone that we are prejudiced against, someone that you judge with some preconceived notions, Make a point to enter into a conversation with them. It may be small talk or something more. I think you will find that we have more in common than differences. We need to enter into a dialogue with one another. That is how we will break down our prejudices and biases. That is how we will be able to live together as brothers and sisters. And it is all about the love.