

Today's reading John 13. 1 - 15

'Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.'

So begins John's account of the Passion of our lord – the story of this Holy Week.

Jesus knows that his "hour" has come to depart from this world and return to the Father (13:1). He knows that the Father has given all things into his hands, and that he has come from God and is going to God (13:3). Knowing all this, he chooses to demonstrate his love for his disciples in a dramatic way by taking the role of a slave and washing their feet.

On Maundy Thursday many churches would usually offer a service of worship that includes the washing of people's feet, as a reminder of Jesus' servant ministry. Perhaps John intends this washing of the disciples' feet to recall what Mary of Bethany had done for Jesus a few days' earlier, washing his feet with expensive perfume and drying them with her hair – an extravagant gesture of love.

In washing his disciples' feet Jesus just uses water and a towel and yet the extravagance of the gesture is no less. We see this in Peter's response, "You're going to wash my feet Lord!"

"Jesus is Lord", we sing, and rightly so and yet, Jesus is also amongst us and alongside us. At this time of worldwide crisis we might take a little time to remember that the servant King is right here amongst us, ministering to us and with us as we seek to hold up the suffering before God.

In this Holy Week we journey with our servant King to the Cross of Calvary, always with our eyes fixed on the coming resurrection.

A prayer:

Extravagant God, you love your people to the end. Help us in this Holy Week to be agents of your love in the world – amongst your people as you are, revealing your love in the world. Help us to be people of hope, even in these dark days, revealing your love and grace.

Amen

