

Holy Thursday

Family Footwashing Service

Feel free to adapt this ritual to your setting, space and circumstances. For example, single-person households may adapt the ritual as a form of personal prayer and spiritual solidarity.

Conduct the Ritual in a space that is suitable: enough space to move around and everyone comfortably seated, as much as possible.

MUSIC:

- Music can be on this Spotify playlist (**note - the free version of Spotify does play commercials**): <https://tinyurl.com/tlpde8g>
- Playlist is also on page 3 of this document



Set-Up:

- Light a candle, place a crucifix or image of Jesus, and/or a Bible in the space.
- Fill a pitcher with warm water.
- Set up a basin or bowl along with some towels
- *When selecting a pitcher and basin, keep in mind that Jesus used what was on hand – your pitcher and basin may be Tupperware.*

✝ **CALL TO WORSHIP:** Gathered together as family, we remember how Jesus washed the feet of his disciples during the Last Supper. This is not the way our family usually celebrates Holy Thursday and yet, it's important to keep in mind that this wasn't the "usual" for Jesus and his disciples either. Following Jesus' example, we gather today to remember and to serve.

✝ **OPENING SONG:** "The Basin and Towel" Michael Card

✝ **OPENING PRAYER:** *(Use the prayer, below, or offer your own)* Loving and merciful God, we give thanks that You have called us to be Your children through Jesus Christ, Your Son and the son of Mary, our Blessed Mother. We are gathered at a time of suffering and sacrifice for many and we need Your help so much. Jesus, you taught us to love as you have loved us, laying down your life and even washing the feet of your disciples. May your Holy Spirit be with us as we wash each other's feet, that your saving message of humble loving service may sink deeply into our hearts. O God, by Your grace, may our home be filled with Your compassion and mercy. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

✠ **SCRIPTURE READING:** John 13:12-17

When Jesus had washed their feet and put his garments back on and reclined at table again, he said to them, “Do you realize what I have done for you? You call me ‘teacher’ and ‘master’ and rightly so, for indeed I am. If I, therefore, the master and teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another’s feet. I have given you an example to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should do, also. Amen, amen, I say to you, no slave is greater than his master nor any messenger greater than the one who sent him. If you understand this, blessed are you if you do it.

✠ **PREPARATION FOR FOOT WASHING:** In a way, Jesus saved the best for last. At the Last Supper, he taught his greatest lessons. He used simple bread and wine to show us that he would always give himself to us. Even though we are unable to receive Holy Communion, Jesus’s great lesson teaches us how to recognize, in the simplest ways, that he is with us. Gathered with his disciples for their last meal together, Jesus knew that he couldn’t just tell them what he wanted them to understand. He had to show them, so he lowered himself and washed their feet. What does the love of God in Jesus Christ look like? Family life is the primary setting for learning this lesson: that we have been made in God’s image and likeness to show love. Even in this time of separation and “distancing,” Jesus wants us to know that he is close to us, and he gives us this opportunity to be close to each other, to touch each other, and to humble ourselves in service to each other. May our hearts be open and our feet bare to this great lesson!

✠ **FOOT WASHING:** *It may be helpful to decide, ahead of time, how to perform the foot washing. There is no one right way, and you can choose to do what you think would be most helpful for you. **Unlike during the summer program though, we encourage each family member (if they are able) to wash the foot of at least one other family member – we are all called to Christ, regardless of age.** Feel free to offer words of love, blessing, or affirmation as you wash or if you prefer, remain in silence.*

Play the Footwashing playlist in the background as you wash.

✠ **SHARING** *(optional - Use one or more of the following, or have your own conversation):*

- What were you praying about, thinking, or feeling during the foot washing?
- Jesus asked his disciples, “Do you realize what I have done for you?” What do you think Jesus wants you to realize?
- What makes this foot washing special during this difficult time for the world?
- Whose feet would you want to wash if you could?

✠ **LORD’S PRAYER AND HAIL MARY** *(Gather in a circle, a huddle, or holding hands)*

✠ **CONCLUDE WITH A SIGN OF PEACE**

✠ **CLOSING SONG:** “Holy Ground”

RECOMMENDED PLAYLIST:

1. "Basin and Towel" Michael Card
2. "No Greater Love" Tim Schoenbachler
3. "Be Forgiven" Tom Booth
4. "Deep Within" David Haas
5. "Healer of My Soul" John Michael Talbot
6. "Ubi Caritas" Audrey Assad
7. "Gentle Healer" Michael Card
8. "Loving & Forgiving" Scott Soper
9. "Oh, the Deep, Deep, Love of Jesus" Audrey Assad
10. "Sacred Silence" Tom Booth
11. "You Alone" Sarah Hart
12. "This Is Holy Ground" John Michael Talbot

BONUS TRACK: "You Are Mine" David Haas

