

## Maundy Thursday: John 13:1-17 – Loving and Serving – A Reflection

### [John 13:1-17](#)

#### Jesus washes his disciples' feet

**John 13:1** It was just before the Passover Festival. 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.



The reredos at All Saints' presents us with an image of the disciples gathered at the table of the Last Supper. It is a picture of great intimacy and emotional power, yet one to which we can become so accustomed as part of our "church fabric" that we have become numbed to its impact. Take some time now to look at it afresh. [Read the passage from John's Gospel](#) and focus on the scene in the photo.

A shared meal amongst close friends is always a special event. We see the disciples talking animatedly amongst themselves, some gazing intently at Jesus, one absorbed in his own thoughts. Even as they share the intimate fellowship of this final Passover meal, and as Jesus prepares to wash his disciples' feet in a gesture of loving service, Judas Iscariot's attentions are elsewhere. Light and shade highlight certain features: notice the individuals' hands at the table. Hands that share table fellowship, dipping bread into rich sauces and mopping up the juices from the meal, gesturing at a comment.

Look at Jesus' hands. Here are hands that have embraced, clapped together in joy and clasped in prayer. They have scooped up water, soothed and brought healing. They will stoop and carry out the menial task of foot-washing, even as they have been raised to create the heavens in harmony with God the Father. Here are hands roughened and scarred by learning the hard labour of the carpenter's workshop. They are the hands that will be pierced by nails, the bones that will be shattered with each brutal blow from the hammers which will hang him on the cross.

Look at the tension in some of the faces, and the impassive smoothness of Jesus' features. *"Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father."* He knows that this path will lead to his glory.

There is no anger, there are no words of recrimination looking at us in that face as we contemplate this scene. There is only love. As Jesus shared this supper with his disciples, and as we look

forward to sharing his supper together, we can know his peace and love, because **“he loved them to the end.”**

A lasting gift Jesus gave his own:  
to share his bread, his loving cup.  
Whatever burdens may bow us down,  
he by his Cross shall lift us up.

And after Supper he washed their feet,  
for service, too, is sacrament.  
In him our joy shall be made complete –  
sent out to serve, as he was sent.

**Fred Pratt Green**

Read the sections from John’s Gospel, look at the picture and think and pray about what you have read and what you see.

### **Arrest him!** [John 18 1-12](#)



When the disciples had sung a hymn they went out to the Mount of Olives. Jesus prayed to the Father, ‘If it is possible, take this cup of suffering from me.’ He said to his disciples, ‘How is it that you were not able to keep watch with me for one hour? The hour has come for the Son of Man to be handed over to the power of sinners.’

**Common Worship**

Go to dark Gethsemane,  
Ye that feel the tempter’s power;  
your Redeemer’s conflict see,  
watch with him one bitter hour;  
turn not from his griefs away;  
Learn of Jesus Christ to pray

**James Montgomery**

### **Peter denies Jesus** [John 19:13-26](#)



Simon Peter and another disciple were following Jesus. Because this disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the high priest’s courtyard, but Peter had to wait outside at the door. The other disciple, who was known to the high priest, came back, spoke to the servant-girl on duty there and brought Peter in. ‘You aren’t one of this man’s disciples too, are you?’ she asked Peter. He replied, ‘I am not.’

**John 18:15-17**

**Rev’d Vicky Barrett**