

HOLY THURSDAY

Jesus washed the feet of his disciples to fulfill the purpose for which he came. He came to serve and not to be served.

Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14 This day shall be a memorial feast for you.

Psalm 116 12-16 My vows to the Lord, I will pay.

I Corinthians 11:23-26 Do this in remembrance of me

John 13:1-15 As I have done for you, you should also do.

We remember Jesus having his last supper with his disciples. Great things happened during this meal. He had washed the feet of his disciples and called them to follow his example in gracious and self-sacrificing service. Listen to him calling you!

Try to imagine this scene. You are sitting at the table with Jesus and his friends on the night before he died. A confusing sorrow overshadows you. Yet a mysterious hope has settled in your heart.

Remember Jesus bending his knees before his disciples with a bowl of water, to wash their feet...take a moment.... imagine him with an apron around his waist and a bowl of water in his hands, on his knees, before you!

God in an apron with a bowl of water ready to wash your feet!!!

We would feel more comfortable, if we could trade places.... We wouldn't mind kneeling before Jesus to wash His feet...We can't let Him love that much! But He said, you can't belong with me, unless I wash your feet....I need to do this for you!!!

This is a gift that he offers us. We must accept this gift of "washing", the cleansing, forgiving, healing and transforming power of "foot-washing" and we must do this for one another....be "foot-washers"!!!

Remember: the Christian image is that of mother and child. However much the child may wash himself, the mother finally washes the child and attends to areas the child has not been able to reach.....Mother knows best!

Accept the gift of love in this "foot-washing" and share it with others. Remember the times you have refused this gift!

Take a moment.... remember: you and I stand in constant need of foot washing!

Saint of the Day, April 17 - St. Benedict Joseph Labre and 13 other saints are remembered this day.

Benedict Joseph Labre was born on March 25, 1748 in the village of Amettes, in northern France. He was the eldest of fifteen children of a prosperous shopkeeper, Jean-Baptiste Labre, and his wife, Anne Grandsire. At the age of sixteen, he approached his uncle, a parish priest, about becoming a Trappist monk, but his parents told him he would have to wait until he grew older. When Benedict was about eighteen, an epidemic fell upon the city, and uncle and nephew busied themselves in the service of the sick. While the uncle took care of the souls and bodies of the people, Benedict cared for the cattle. His uncle was among the last victims of the epidemic.

Benedict Joseph Labre tried to join the religious orders of the Trappists, the Carthusians and the Cistercians, but did not come up to their requirements. He was under age, he was too delicate; he had no special recommendations. Then, at age 18, a profound change took place. Benedict lost his desire to study and gave up all thoughts of the priesthood. He became a pilgrim, traveling from one great shrine to another, living off alms. He wore the rags of a beggar and shared his food with the poor. Filled with the love of God and neighbor, Benedict had special devotion to the Blessed Mother and to the Blessed Sacrament. In Rome, where he lived in the Colosseum for a time, he was called "the poor man of the Forty Hours devotion" and "the beggar of Rome." The people accepted his ragged appearance better than he did. His excuse to himself was that "our comfort is not in this world."

On April 16, 1783, the last day of his life, Benedict dragged himself to a church in Rome and prayed there for two hours before he collapsed, dying peacefully in a nearby house. Immediately after his death, the people proclaimed him a saint. Benedict Joseph Labre was canonized by Pope Leo XIII in 1881.

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