



As I have Done, So You Must Do

by Sister Marilyn Marie Ellerbrock, SND
Associate Director, Office of Vocations

Palms strewn in the street, an intimate gathering of friends at table, a tomb made empty by the explosion of unbounded life -- the approaching days of Holy Week carry some of the most vivid and vibrant images of our faith. The question is how will these images, or even more clearly the *reality* behind these images, affect a radical conversion in my life?

One of the truths highlighted for me during the upcoming solemnities is the privilege of true ministry. What does Jesus have to teach us about the call to service? The clarity of His teaching is seen *in action* during the Last Supper. Before sharing His own Body and Blood in Eucharist, He shares Himself in humility and service.

“He rose from table and took off his outer garments. He took a towel and tied it around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet and dry them with the towel around his waist” (Jn 13:4-5).

In sharp contrast to the cultural emphasis on demanding attention to and fulfillment of my own needs, the drama of Jesus’ entire life calls me to grow in awareness of the needs of others and to spend my life in service of those needs. The needs of those around me must dictate the very fabric of my life of service. Jesus knows well the accumulated dust and fatigue that not only cover the feet of His apostles but weigh on their hearts as well. He is able to identify their doubt and fear, their ignorance and jealousy – their humanity that elicits His healing and nurturing touch.

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Jesus' acute awareness of the needs of others does not remain on the levels of intellect and emotion. His deep desire to respond compels Him to place aside His own agenda and His inherent right to be called "teacher" and "master." He knows the greater impact of being a servant leader. He does the unthinkable and serves His apostles as a slave would serve them.

"I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do"

(Jn 13:15)

The question remains how this invaluable and unforgettable lesson will take root in my life? I, too, am called to "take off the outer garment" of my pride and lay it aside. My subtle prejudices and discriminations have no place in my following of Jesus. For the true follower of Jesus, there is no room for a sense of entitlement. I cannot live a content life, while the blinders of my self-concern keep me unaware of the crying need of those around me. Jesus' commission leaves no doubt of the expectation He has for me: "I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do" (Jn 13: 15).

As I kneel before the broken and bruised humanity God places before me, I can choose to see reflected in the faces and hands and feet of those I serve the face and hands and feet of Jesus. What an awesome privilege I have to wash and dry the feet of my Lord and my God!

Calendar of Events

Walk for Life - March 21, 2008. Good Friday. Frenchtown to Carey.

Hospitality Youth Club - April 5, 2008. The Little Sisters of the Poor are hosting a hospitality youth club every 3rd Saturday of every month. It is for young girls ages 13-17. It starts at 11:00 a.m. with Mass, followed by a short break. 12 noon serve the residence with their meal; 1:00 p.m. lunch with the sisters; followed by a recreational activity with the residents. For more information contact Sr. Lourdes at 419-698-4331.

World Day of Prayer for Vocations - April 13, 2008

Sisters of Notre Dame Retreat - April 18-19, 2008. A Discernment Retreat with the Sisters of Notre Dame for single catholic women, ages 18-35. The retreat begins on Friday evening, April 18 and ends on Saturday April 19. The overnight retreat includes input on discernment, reflection on the charism of the Sisters of Notre Dame, time for quiet prayer and adoration, sharing with others and Sunday liturgy. Send in your reservation by April 14 to Sister Mary Delores Gatliff, SND, 3837 Secor Road, Toledo, OH 43623 or email dgatliff@toledosnd.org.

CATHOLIC CATECHISM CORNER

Ministry

The service or work of sanctification performed by the preaching of the word and the celebration of the sacraments by those in Holy Orders, or in determined circumstances, by laity (893, 1536, 903).

SIGHTINGS ON THE WEB

Check the "What's Current" section at www.toledovocations.com for the latest "news."

Did You Know?

- The Easter Triduum begins with the evening Mass on Holy Thursday and ends with evening prayer on Easter Sunday.
- The Tenebrae Service during Holy Week recreates the emotional aspects of the Passion story.

For more info:

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