

Prayer of the Church

O God, by the example of your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, you taught us the greatness of true humility, and call us to watch with him in his passion. Give us grace to serve one another in all lowliness, and to enter into the fellowship of his suffering; in his name and for his sake. **Amen**

Message: Two in One

I invite you to join me in an illustration: [Christ's two natures]

- Lift your hand at a comfortable distance
- Point upward with your index finger
- Look at finger with both eyes - How many fingers do you see? [one]
- Keeping both eyes open, look straight ahead, and move your finger until it's about 6" from your nose.
- How many fingers do you see now? [two]
- Close your right eye. How many fingers do you see? [one]
- Open right eye/close the left. How many fingers do you see? [one]
- Look again with both eyes. How many fingers do you see? [two]
- Now focus on the finger with both eyes. How many now? [one]
- How many fingers are really there? [one]

This simple illustration shows us how one thing can appear as two.

There is one finger. We are the ones who see two. When you read the account of Jesus washing his disciples' feet, what do you see?

Do you see one image or two? Do you see...

Jesus, a humble man serving others because that's all he knows

A man conceived out of wedlock

A refugee as a child because of fear and hatred of a king

A carpenter's son who followed in his father's footsteps until age 30

Someone who worked with his hands, had little formal education

A man from Nazareth, a town on the "other side of the tracks"

Someone who was not an attractive man

A Galilean from the northern region where the despised Samaritans live

An itinerant teacher, who had no home, wandering from town to town, relying on the generosity of others

Or do you see...

Jesus, the Messiah – One who is without equal

Second person of the Trinity – one with the Father and Holy Spirit

The King of Kings and Lord of Lords

One with authority over heaven and earth

One who came to save us and to bring the kingdom of God

One who will come again in glory and majesty

One who will judge everyone, living or dead

There are two images: one human and one divine. There is only one person Jesus, who is fully God and fully human. The two images are not in conflict or disagreement with each other. We are the ones who have trouble seeing Jesus as God and human, together in one nature.

We have trouble seeing:

Jesus, the Son of God, the eternal One who came to save us, serving to reverse the order of all things (first shall be last)

Conceived by the Holy Spirit

Kept safe as a child by dreams God sent to Joseph, his father

A child who amazed the teachers in the synagogue by age 12

One who fulfilled Scripture by being born in Bethlehem, living in Nazareth

One who was wise, strong and found favor before other people

One who honored and kept God’s Law

A preacher, teacher and healer who went where people were, self-sacrificing, humble, loving, faithful and steadfast (Gal 5:22)

Which Jesus washed the feet of the disciples that night?

The Jesus who knew his time had come to an end. It was time to go to God the Father. Jesus loved his disciples and so he loved them to the very end. And so, he showed his love in this humble act. Which Jesus was it? Both! Jesus’ human and divine natures are inseparable, in unison and harmony – never in disagreement. Two who are one. Jesus gave us a lesson in what it means to be humble as a human, while showing us the humility of God. The Son of God was willing to come down, take the form of a human and submit himself by serving us in such a lowly way. Without a doubt, God is love!

Whose feet did Jesus wash?

Jesus washed the feet of the disciples, everyone who was at the table eating with him:

- ***Jesus washed the feet of Peter***, who once again didn't understand what was happening. Peter refused to be washed and then went overboard, asking Jesus to wash all of him. Peter missed point of humility and putting other's care, comfort and concerns first, regardless of their situation, position or wrongs.
- ***Jesus washed the feet of Judas***, even though Jesus knew Judas would betray him to the authorities in a few hours, leading directly to his crucifixion and death. (John 13:2-3; 18; 21-30)
- ***Jesus washed the feet of all the disciples***, even though he knew they would flee in fear when the authorities came and remain in hiding for days after his death on a cross.

Jesus invites us to share in his passion through this humble demonstration of love. Sadly, some of us will misunderstand Jesus and deny him like Peter did. Some will betray him. And all of us will flee, when put to the test. Do not fear or give up hope, because Jesus offers one, final lesson to help us and restore us.

What is the lesson? Jesus' final lesson is this: *“I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another”* (John 13:34-35).

Jesus is teaching all of his disciples (then, now and in future), that love is the source of our passion, power and authority as his followers. In this way, Jesus is gloried and God is glorified. How? Jesus is glorified because he has finished the preparation of his disciples. All that remains is to win the final victory. God is glorified because the Son has completed his mission by teaching us the final, greatest lesson. Jesus, the Son of God, two in one, humbled himself by taking on the role of a servant to show us how we are to live our lives as Christians. Loving others with humility is the way of life in heaven. Let's start practicing now. Glory be to God!

Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19 (NRSV)

I love the LORD, because he has heard my voice and my supplications. Because he inclined his ear to me, therefore I will call on him as long as I live. The snares of death encompassed me; the pangs of Sheol laid hold on me; I suffered distress and anguish. Then I called on the name of the LORD: “O LORD, I pray, save my life!” What shall I return to the LORD for all his bounty to me? I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the LORD, I will pay my vows to the LORD in the presence of all his people. Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his faithful ones. O LORD, I am your servant; I am your servant, the child of your serving girl. You have loosed my bonds. I will offer to you a thanksgiving sacrifice and call on the name of the LORD. I will pay my vows to the LORD in the presence of all his people, in the courts of the house of the LORD, in your midst, O Jerusalem. Praise the LORD!

John 13:1-17, 31b-35 (NRSV)

Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, “Lord, are you going to wash my feet?” Jesus answered, “You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand.” Peter said to him, “You will never wash my feet.” Jesus answered, “Unless I wash you, you have no share with me.” Simon Peter said to him, “Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!” Jesus said to him, “One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you.” For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, “Not all of you are clean.”

After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord - and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.

When he had gone out, Jesus said, “Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come.’ I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”