**Friday**

**Humility**



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**Reflecting on:**

**“A Servant Attitude – Humility”**

**Readings:**

John 13: 1-15

**Other Readings:**

Exodus 12: 1-8 11-14; Psalm 116: 12-13, 15-18; 1 Corinthians 11: 23-26

**1. Lectio:** John is the only Gospel writer to give us this precious example of Jesus washing the disciples’ feet.

By washing their feet Jesus humbles himself in a way that would have shocked the disciples. The host would normally provide water for guests to wash their own feet when entering the house (Luke 7: 44). A servant or slave might be given the task, or disciples might possibly wash their teacher’s feet, but not the other way round. This was completely unexpected.

This self-humiliation is a deep symbol for the crucifixion of Christ. We cannot gain salvation by our actions. It is by the humble sacrifice of the Son of God that we are saved.

Peter does not understand this sign at first and protests. Jesus insists that Peter must allow him to wash his feet. Peter misunderstands again and wants to be purified completely. What Jesus is looking for here is humility – which is the only way we can receive his gift of salvation.

In this practical action Jesus also demonstrates a very important lesson to the disciples and to us – we must serve one another just as he serves us.

**2. Meditatio:**

**\*** Think about what an incredible act of humility this is. The Son of God is washing the feet of his disciples!

**\*** Jesus humbles himself to death on the cross for us. We can do nothing to redeem ourselves. We simply have to respond to God’s great love and accept his gift of salvation. Marvel at this wonderful gift.

**\*** Consider how willing you are to serve your brethren in your community or other Christians in your parish, or the community of God’s people wherever they are. Ask God to help you follow Jesus’ example and to show you ways you can serve your fellow Christians.

**3. Oratio:**

Thank God for the great humility of Jesus who saved us from sin and eternal death. Ask the holy Spirit to help you overcome pride and selfishness.

Pray the words of Psalm 116: 12 as your own pray today. Listen to anything the Holy Spirit may say to you.

‘What can I offer to the Lord for all his goodness to me?’

**4. Contemplatio:**

Spend some-time reflecting on Christ’s love and humble sacrifice, his painful death for our sake, his never ending desire to be his fellowship with us and to draw us to God the Father.

* **Prayer of the Day**

Lord, God Almighty,

You give me so many blessings and graces in my life.

You offer me days and years to live in your care.

You give me splendid and wonderful things to enjoy.

You surround me with so many people who shower me with love,

and whom I may love in return.

Teach me one precious thing in my life: How I am to choose

in order to do your holy will.

I ask this, through Christ, my Lord. Amen.

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**Reflecting on:**

**“Walk Humbly”**

**Readings:**

Luke 14: 1, 7-14

**Other Readings:** Ecclesiasticus 3: 17-20, 28-29; Psalm 68: 3-6, 9-10; Hebrew 12: 18-19, 22-24.

**1. Lectio:** Today we join Jesus as he dines with a leading Pharisee. All the guests at the dinner are watching to see how Jesus will behave. What they don’t notice is Jesus observing their proud ways.

In Jesus’ day the most important seats were close to the host and each of the Pharisees’ guests wanted one of these seats for themselves.

Jesus uses the opportunity to teach the dinner guests a better way to behave. His comments are a reminder of Jewish teaching summed up in verses like Proverbs 25: 6-7, *“When you stand before the king, don’t try to impress him and pretend to be important. It is better to be asked to take a higher position than to be told to give your place to someone more important.”*

Of course the irony is that had the host realised who Jesus was then he would have immediately given Jesus the place of honour.

Jesus then emphasises hospitality and generosity towards people who cannot reciprocate – the poor and physically disadvantaged. Again it is a question of our attitudes. Do we exclude others because of selfishness or pride?

Jesus’ concern is always to be inclusive. He spent time with people who were not considered ‘respectable’. The Kingdom of God should be, and is, open to all irrespective of man-made social status because before God we are all sinners in need of salvation.

**2. Mediatio:**

**\*** The apostle took Jesus’ words to heart as he also taught, ‘And all of you must put on the apron of humility, to serve one another; for the scripture says, “God resists the proud but shows the favour to the humble.” Humble yourselves, then, under God’s mighty hand, so that he will lift you up in his own good time’. (1 Peter 5: 5-6)

**\*** Jesus regularly reminded his listeners about humility. Who do you think it is important for us to keep a humble attitude towards others? Why is pride so dangerous?

**\*** Think about who you invite as your guests. Does Jesus’ teaching challenge your choice of guests?

**3. Oratio:**

Ask God to speak to you from today’s reading about humility and hospitality.

Read Psalm 68: 1-10. Notice the contrast between God’s majesty and his concern for the poor, the lonely, for widows, orphans and prisoners. Pray for people in these situations. The Holy Spirit may bring specific people to mind. God may also show you something practical you can do to help.

**4. Contemplatio:**

Read Philippians 2: 3-11 and think about the example Jesus gives us of humility and service. Let God bring to mind small steps you can take in this direction during the coming weeks.

* **Prayer of the Day**

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You give me splendid and wonderful things to enjoy.

You surround me with so many people who shower me with love,

and whom I may love in return.

Teach me one precious thing in my life: How I am to choose

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