

# Maundy Thursday, the day we are told to be ordinary, loving people

Rev'd Peter Balabanski

Reflections for Maundy Thursday 2019

O Lord Jesus Christ, enthroned in the majesty of heaven, when you came from God, you chose to be one who serves.

We adore you, because you laid aside the garment of your glory, and clothed yourself with the lowest humility, and serve your disciples by washing their feet.

Teach us to know what you have done, and to follow your example; deliver us from pride, jealousy and ambition, and make us ready to be subject to one another, and with lowliness, to serve one another for your sake,

O Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour.  
*Prayers # 231*

*Parish*

I found this prayer recently, and loved the way it focussed on the tremendous paradox of who Jesus is, on the one hand, and the really ordinary, practical things he did. Here's a very old hymn that I think might have inspired this prayer.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, the creator God of power and glory; who sits by right between the cherubim is taking upon himself the form of a servant.

He who is clothed with light as with a garment; takes off his coat and girds himself with a towel.

He to whom all creatures on earth and in heaven bow the knee: is kneeling in humility before his disciples to wash their

feet.

*From the Armenian*

and here's another

Wisdom, who orders the mighty waters above the sky: who gives the oceans their bounds and controls the seas heavenly wisdom is pouring water into a basin: and the ruler of the universe is washing the feet of the lowliest slave

*From the Greek*

These are lovely old hymns that take us into the awesome mystery of what was going on in the upper room that night.

But sometimes we can be drawn so far into the mystery that we forget the most amazing thing of all; yet that's also to be found in these old hymns.

The most amazing thing to me is just how mundane this meal is that we read about tonight.

Certainly it's a Passover meal, so it's got all the ritual and symbolism wrapped up in it that we heard about in the Exodus reading. But it's also something normal people did – and still do. The women would have been there, lighting the candles and saying the prayers. There would have been children there too, asking the old questions about the special foods.

It's just a moment in some people's ordinary lives – it could have been anyone's moment – and he was there; *one* of them; one of *us*. He's here *now* too – calling us to live out the same, practical, thoughtful love that he did. Just ordinary love.

It's Maundy Thursday – the day we were told to be ordinary, loving people.

Love is the key to the kingdom of heaven: and the path to everlasting life.

Love makes human beings the sons and daughters of God: and

heirs to his kingdom.

By love, corrupt nature is purified: and mortality puts on immortality, the earthly is transformed into the heavenly; and we creatures of dust and ashes are raised to be children of light. *From the Armenian*

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