

God's Love and Sacrifice

Venerable Wong Tak Meng Archdeacon for Community Services

Every year, on the day before Good Friday, we commemorate Maundy Thursday by re-enacting Christ washing His disciples' feet and instituting the Lord's Supper. More than a ceremony and a ritual, Maundy Thursday is a perpetual reminder for us about Christ's example of Love expressed through Giving and Serving.

John 13:1 Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.

The entire incarnation, birth, life and death of Christ (Philippians 2:6-8) is an act of His Love through Giving. Jesus taught His disciples what love mean, when He gave Him to them, saying:

Take, eat; this is my body... Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins." (Matthew 26:26-28)

More than sentimental feelings, romantic poetry and noble intentions, Love is sacrificial giving: Giving of what we have and who we are, that others may be blessed at our expense.

Furthermore, when He took off His outer garments, wrapped a towel around His waist, poured water into a basin and began washing His disciples' feet, taking the place of a servant, Christ was teaching them that Love is also about humble serving.

Serving first calls for noticing the needs of others above our own. It often challenges us with emotional questions such as "Why me? What if others reject me? What if I am taken advantage of, or taken for granted? Will others look down on me?"

Ultimately the question is: "Who am I, and whose example am I following?" When the answer is "I am a disciple of Christ, I am merely following His example" then we will find His strength to act like Him.

This Lent season, let us remember that the ultimate devotion and the whole point of fasting is to become more like Christ: loving through sacrificial giving and humble serving of those in need around us.

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." (John 13:34-35)

Reflection Questions

- Sacrificial Giving Jesus demonstrated His love through the ultimate act of giving—His life. In what ways is God calling you to practice sacrificial love in your daily life? Is there something you need to give up or share so that others may be blessed?
- Serving in Humility When Jesus washed His disciples' feet, He took the position of a servant. Are there areas in your life where pride or fear holds you back from serving others? How can you follow Christ's example of humility and service?

• Living Out God's Love - Jesus said that love for one another is the defining mark of His disciples (John 13:34-35). How can you be intentional in showing Christ-like love to those around you, even when it is inconvenient or challenging?

Prayer

Lord Jesus, help me during this Lent season, not to seek you only intellectually, or fast only to discipline my appetites. Help me to be more like you, in thought, word and deed. Help me to love as You commanded and showed me: through sacrificial giving and humble serving. May people see You in me and glorify Your name. Amen.

WEEK TWO FAITH IN ACTION

In this season of prayer, fasting, and sacrificial giving, our 'Faith in Action' series highlights key Diocesan ministries where you can make an impact.

This week, we are spotlighting the work of our Community Service Chaplaincy.

Community Service Chaplaincy

The Diocesan Community Service Chaplaincy Ministry provides emotional, social and spiritual care for the beneficiaries (patients, etc) and staff of St Andrew's Mission Hospital (SAMH) and Singapore Anglican Community Services (SACS).

While befriending, empathetic listening, reminiscence, social engagement, practical help, etc., offered on a non-religious basis can be funded by public funds, the Chaplaincy Ministry has to rely on the non-tax-exempt donations of Christians and churches to support the religious portion of our work. Such non-tax-exempt donations enable our chaplains to conduct chapel services, devotions, prayer meetings and bible studies, and offer care and counseling of a religious nature.

Your generous non-tax-exempt donations through the Diocese will help the Chaplaincy Ministry to meet its fund-raising target of \$\$800,000 in 2025.

Will you consider giving to the SAMH-SACS Chaplaincy Ministry this Lent?

Your contribution will support our Chaplains to share God's Love and His Word to the wider community.

If you would like to contribute to the SAMH-SACS Chaplaincy Ministry, you may contribute via PayNow.

PayNow via UEN T08CC4016J.

Please indicate SAMH-SACS Chaplaincy.

Thank you for your unwavering support and your fervent prayers!

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