

March 20, 2008
Holy Thursday

Readings of the day may be found on the following link:

<http://www.nccbuscc.org/nab>

Mass of the Lord's Supper

Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14

Psalms 116:12-13, 15-16bc, 17-18

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

John 13:1-15

So when he had washed their feet and put his garments back on and reclined at table again, he said to them, "Do you realize what I have done for you? You call me 'teacher' and 'master,' and rightly so, for indeed I am. If I, therefore, the master and teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another's feet. I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do."

Whenever I ask children a question that relates in any way to what Jesus wants of us, they invariably respond that we are called to 'be nice' to one another. While they use a variety of words to express that one idea, it all boils down to kindness. It pains me to think of how long it took me to move beyond that childhood view of the call of Jesus. The call to serve is so much more and there are times that I wish I do not see it so clearly as knowledge and vision does not make it an easy task. As I think of those who said yes to this call, many come to mind. The one that stands out most profoundly for me right at this moment is Gandhi. He served his country and fellowman by standing up to the injustice inflicted upon them by the British. He saw the injustice. He chose to take a stand against it. He also chose not to engage in violence of any kind no matter what was done to him. And he had compassion for his oppressors. He served his countrymen by gaining them freedom from those who oppressed them. It was very much the walk of Jesus. In fact, the Sermon on the Mount was one of Gandhi's daily readings. He is an example of someone who was called to serve, heard the call, and responded without condition—just like Jesus.

On this evening of Holy Thursday, as we recall the supper Jesus shared with his disciples and how he washed their feet as a message for them to do the same for one another, my prayer is that I not only remember and celebrate this life I have been called to live, but that I also live it as Jesus lived it, as Gandhi lived it, and as so many others who have walked this earth have and continue to live it.

I have given you a model to follow...