

Holy Thursday: Jesus Washes Our Feet

FOR THE TEACHER:

This lesson is designed to help the children understand the reason for the bread and wine of communion and the washing of feet in connection with our remembrance of Jesus' last supper with his disciples.

Questions marked with an asterisk (*) are part of the Trinitarian Catechism.

FIRST ACTIVITY: Divide the kids up into two teams and have a brief quiz game about Jesus and his last supper with the disciples. Use these questions:

- *What did Jesus and his disciples do the night before Jesus died? *Ate a last supper together that included bread and wine.*
 - *What did Jesus say the bread symbolized? *His body*
 - *What did Jesus say the wine symbolized? *His blood*
 - *What do we call it when we eat the bread and wine to remind us of Jesus? *Communion, Eucharist, or the Lord's Supper*
 - *When do we celebrate the last supper? *Every time we take communion and especially on Holy Thursday.*
 - *What special ceremony do we do on Holy Thursday to remember how Jesus loves us? *We wash each others' feet as he washed the disciples feet.*
- Why were the disciples so shocked that Jesus washed their feet? *That was a job for the lowest slave in the house.*

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Ask for a helper to pass out a bible to each child. Have them all turn to John 13:1-17. For older kids, have them take turns reading.

1It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love.

2The evening meal was being served, and the devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray Jesus. 3Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; 4so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. 5After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

6He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

7Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand."

8"No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet."

Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me."

9"Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!"

10 Jesus answered, "A person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet; his whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you." 11 For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean.

12 When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. 13 "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. 14 Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. 15 I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. 16 I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. 17 Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

PRIMARY LESSON: Jesus has washed us to make us clean to be in his Father's house forever. When we wash each others' feet we are reminding each other of what Jesus has done.

SECOND ACTIVITY: Have the kids wash each others' feet - try using moist towlettes if water in basins is too messy or impractical.

PRAYER: For older kids, have one of them pray this prayer (or come up with their own). For younger kids, have them repeat after you as you read the prayer.

Father in heaven, thank you for sending Jesus to make us clean so that we can be in your house forever as your children. Jesus, thank you for being willing serve us and take care of us. Holy Spirit, help us to believe that our Father loves us and help us to participate in Jesus' service to the world. In Jesus' name, Amen.