



ST. LUKE IN THE FIELDS  
CELEBRATING 200 YEARS

MAUNDY THURSDAY

JOHN 13:1-17, 31B-35

A SERMON BY THE REV. BO REYNOLDS  
APRIL 9, 2020

“Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him...”

Now? Right now?

Now, only after the master takes the form of a servant?

Now, only after the water is poured out, cool, clean water now muddied with the dust and sweat of tired, aching feet, and clean linens sullied in the act of drying and making clean?

Now, after the bread has been shattered, torn and passed, the cup drained dry and only remnants remain, after the accuser had already infected the heart of a close friend and disciple and set him on this destructive task?

Now, amidst all of the anxiety and the fear, the suspense of what happens next, the suspicion and the sadness, the glory of God is fully present.

Year after year, the temptation arises to read this story in its fuller context, to mitigate the sharpness of

impending loss, to cut the gathering darkness with the Easter dawn we know is coming.

But in doing so we miss this fact: That the glory of God is made uniquely manifest at this dark moment. We miss that the glory of God is manifest in, and through, and because of a sacrament of brokenness and shattering, of pouring out and emptying. We miss it because we want to resist the possibility that God's glory can exist in dark places; it doesn't make sense because we cling to a dichotomy of light over darkness, failing to realize that the power of the Light which shines in the darkness is not that it vanquishes, but that it persists.

It is not overcome.  
It is present now.

It seems vulgar to say that God's glory is present in world which is shrouded in fear and sickness, when death hovers over our very doorstep,  
but are these not the times in which we need the light of God's glory to remain with us, in the face of it all?

Where then does the Light of that Glory reside?

Perhaps it is easier to assume that we are alone in this moment of isolation and apprehension, that God's glory waits for us above and beyond the grit and dust and shattered pieces,

But no. Jesus, in gifting the Eucharist to his disciples, the sacrament of broken pieces, and in kneeling before his disciples to wash their tired feet, the sacrament of poured out emptiness, redirects our focus and shows us the presence of God's glory in the midst of the dirt and the grit and jumbled up pieces of life. It is a glory for the cracks and fissures of life, a glory for dark places and trembling hands.

It is a glory present now with our doctors and healthcare workers who work double shifts in the face of danger to preserve life.

It is present now with a grocery store cashier who wakes early and goes into work in order to keep her city fed.

It is found in the church, scattered and cut off, shut indoors, praying in front of laptops or well worn prayerbooks.

Here, in the emptiness of our streets and the jumbled up pieces of our lives, may we still see God's glorious presence, or better yet, may we be a ray of this persistent and Divine glory in the darkness of someone else's life.

AMEN





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