

Just a few random thoughts this week on the triduum – Hopefully they are not too disjointed and you can get some images in your own context to play around with during this holiest of times in the church year!

Today is Maundy Thursday and any other year we would be getting ready for Maundy Thursday Services in the evening. This day kicks off the Triduum of the Holy week. We read the great story of Jesus washing his Disciple's feet and telling them to serve and to love one another as I have loved you. I have often thought that we should have added foot washing (service) to our neighbor as part of our sacramental life together since it checks off all the necessary things – Earthly element – Promise of God – Most importantly we are commanded to do so by Jesus. That is what the word Maundy actually means – It is shorthand Latin for mandate or command. Something to wrestle with for us this weekend as we are doing our best to serve our neighbor by not being able to do those things we like to do best during Holy Week. Maybe we can find our sacramental life together by recognizing that we are washing our neighbor's feet and serving and loving them by staying home as much as possible right now.

I have always loved the Good Friday Tenebrae service. There is not much else that captures the utter futility of it all as we hear the last words of Jesus and slowly snuff out the candles one by one. The slamming shut of the book and the darkness coming over the congregation as the service ends is a stark reminder to us of the ugliness of the cross. Yet there is the light of the Christ candle as it is carried out reminding us on this side of the resurrection that Hope is alive even in the midst of the darkness.

When Sarah and I were married and moved to Denver, Colorado we joined a small Lutheran Church that had as its practice to hold Easter Vigil time. Not many churches do this much anymore but it was fun to engage this practice of hopeful expectation as the gathered people. We would read the stories of God interacting with God's people throughout the Hebrew bible and spend time in prayer, and then when the sun began to rise, go out and welcome a new day where all possibilities seem doable because of what God has done in resurrection. On a side note, my internship site, Immanuel Lutheran, in Killeen, Texas did an abbreviated service that ended right about midnight. That particular year the time change happened on Easter day so by the time we arrived home it was actually two in the morning and then we had to get up for the sunrise service that Immanuel did every year in their cemetery – And of course the interns had to do that service. Even with all the tiredness Easter still abounded.

I have not had to grapple with the new ways of doing church that many of my colleagues are because I have been in transition but my time will come. I am hearing that learning how to become filmmakers and technocrats has been wearing on many of us - lay folks and clergy alike. Just remember that even in our fatigue Easter still abounds!

See all in church eventually but for now check out all of the on line opportunities both of our context and others to continue to keep hope and Easter joy alive.

Peace,
Rev. Jeff