



A weekly reflection by members of the Precious Blood Community

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*“...whoever wishes to be great among you will be your servant;
whoever wishes to be first among you will be the slave of all.” (Mark 10:43)*

Working at Room In The Inn – a resource center for folks experiencing homelessness in Nashville, TN – our faith is most visible in action. Each week, usually on Wednesday mornings, along with showers, laundry services, classes, café, and a host of other programs, we have Foot Clinic in the art room upstairs, where volunteers wash our guests’ feet.

Before working here, I had the privilege of not thinking about how much someone must walk in a city whose public transit costs money and essential buildings – the social security office, the hospital, the free mental health clinic – are *not* close to each other. I’ve heard that people in the journey of homelessness walk an average of 15 miles each day. Knowing that showers, fresh socks, and shoes of the appropriate size and support are often hard to come by, you can imagine how much love and care one’s feet might need.

Part of what makes the experience of washing someone’s feet, trimming their toenails, and rubbing them with lotion so powerful is the vulnerability of both washer and the washed. For me, I have ticklish feet and imagine I would find it difficult not to giggle the entire time. But how intimate it is to bare my dirty feet to a stranger and allow them to wash and care for me. Jesus says in our passage today, “...whoever wishes to be great among you will be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you will be the slave of all.” I don’t believe that Jesus wants me to stay in the Foot Clinic all day so that I can be great. But maybe instead to know my own place in a community that gives and receives care for one other. At times, I will be both washer and washed.

At Easter, Pope Francis said to us, “Peace is never made with arms, but with outstretched hands and open hearts.” This peace is needed not just for those who make their home on the streets, but for our neighbors in Palestine. It was difficult for me to hear in our response today, “He has granted peace in your borders, [Jerusalem],” as we know the violence ripping apart families, communities, and cities in Gaza and the West Bank. May we, united in the Body of Christ, take up Jesus’ chalice - and Pope Francis’ call for an immediate ceasefire - today as ministers of peace to suffering people throughout the world.

Raechel served as a Precious Blood Volunteer in 2021 / 2022
and also at the Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation.

This weekly reflection is made available to all who are part of our Precious Blood family. Feel free to share it with others. Would you be willing to write a reflection? If so, please contact Vicky Otto at votto@pbspiritualityinstitute.org