

“Do this in memory of me.”

Today, the church commemorates three events: the Institution of the *M. Holy Eucharist*, of *ministerial priesthood* and the giving of the *new commandment*. They can only be understood as an intensely personal event at the *end day of Jesus' life*, as manifestation of his endless mercy and love for humanity.

Jesus knew very well, the infidelities in the life of his disciples. But that did not prevent him from *loving them till the end*. They often disputed over who would be the greatest among them. They were fighting between themselves regarding, who would wash Jesus' feet, as they were preparing the Supper. After all, it was the task of the slave to wash the feet of the master, and no one would dare to do it. Jesus takes them by surprise, kneels and washes their feet. Jesus' washing does not depend on whether they 'deserve' this or not, for Jesus washed even the feet of Judas, the betrayer. It simply says: Its good that you are!

Jesus could transform the lives of his disciples, by reaching out to them in humble service. He is teaching us the great lesson: “*unless you are able to bend till the feet of your neighbour, you won't be able to understand the mystery of the Holy Eucharist*”. He knows our infidelities also, as he knew those of his disciples. His deeply personal gesture becomes the foundation of our own relationship with Christ. B&S, the washing of feet is nothing but a symbol of *Jesus, sanctifying the souls of his disciples, by washing away their sins with his blood on the cross, on the next day-Friday*.

And why did Jesus institute the Eucharist? “*Do this in remembrance of me*”! This was his mandate to the Apostles, and thus commissioned them as Priests, ministers of the Holy Euch. (Memorial of what? *Passover meal* = memory of the deliverance; Jesus=memorial of something to happen/next day. The sacrifice on the cross is the *only sacrifice*, of blood pleasing to God, offered once and for ever for the deliverance of all. This sacrifice of blood can

never be repeated. The same sacrifice, without shedding blood, can/should be repeated, by Euch. That is why, Jesus instituted Eucharist, the source and summit of all Christian Life and worship.

The greatest gift of God to humanity is the *gift of God's self*. Jesus instituted the sacrament of Eucharist, "on the night he was betrayed": the time when his love and trust were betrayed by those close to him; his own disciple. Despite all this, he continues to give himself away amidst betrayal & abandonment.

Today we also remember Jesus giving the commandments: Love one another as I have loved you. *These two commands are strictly interrelated*, as they point to the *very essence of Christian identity*. It's through the Holy Eucharist, which is *the source and summit* of our faith and our Christian life, that the **people of God become a community of love**. Without Eucharist, there is no life for the church. Holy Euch., is Jesus' way of embracing us, of holding us close to his heart, of telling us how dearly we are loved.

Friends, if you ever knew the true meaning, value and greatness of the Holy Eucharist, you would ever miss a Sunday mass. Let's not forget that we are part and parcel of his body, the mystical body-the church. *Eucharist is the greatest sign, greatest miracle Jesus ever did*. Therefore, the greatest act that the church can perform is the celebration of the holy Eucharist. Our Christian community is established this day at cenacle, in the upper room, upon the new commandment of love, the covenant sealed by Jesus' blood on the cross. It is that love that strengthens us and keep us united, to spread the spark of love and kindness to the wounded world, in desperation, and brokenness.

As we take refuge in the loving warmth of God's embrace in the Holy Eucharist, let us bring that embrace to today's suffering world, as messengers of love & Mercy.
