

Pastoral Care Project

Reg. Charity No: 1094766



Our Mission

"To raise awareness to the spiritual needs of the frail elderly – enabling carers to support them in their journey to the fullness of life."

• SPIRITUAL CARE • RAISING AWARENESS • REFLECTION • ONE TO ONE SUPPORT •



The Water of your Blessing

Service of Reflection

Pastoral Care Project ©



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1. Welcome and Prayer (create your own prayer)
2. Hymn: A New Commandment
3. Gospel John 13 1-15
4. Reflection on the Gospel
5. Read Poem - The Water of your Blessing

Do not kneel, My Lord.
It is for me to kneel
At your feet.
With your loving hands you
Touch my feet...
Loving, gentle hands
Which made those who ail and hurt
Whole and well.
You washed my feet with
Water cool and soothing...
The water of your
Blessing.
You dried my feet with
Linen pure; and gentleness.
But infinitely you washed
My heart...
A heart 'oft grieved and saddened.
You drew me close and called me Son,
And filled me with your grace,
Your great Amen

(M. Cauchi)

6. Hymn: This Is My Body
7. Prayer
Jesus I come into the warmth of your presence.
I come before you holding the water jug of my life.
Your eyes meet mine and I know as Peter knew – the depth of your love– for me. Amen
8. Action : Water and Jug— offering of my life, my service and my love.
9. Close service with Hymn: A New Commandment

The Water of your Blessing - Leaders Notes

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Preparation and Resources

Leaders

It is best if at least two people lead the service of reflection and leaders should be familiar with leading prayer.

The leader/s will decide which sections they are going to lead and so will have prepared and prayed the material beforehand.

The leaders can alternate what they do and so allow the prayer and reflection to flow. Compose your own prayer to begin the service.

The service should not be rushed, allow for times of silence— for example at the end of the gospel, following reflections and Water and Jug experience.

Seating

Set out seating in a circle for a more prayerful experience.

Table setting

1. Suitable low table
2. Table covering - blue fabric and a white cloth or towel
3. Glass Jug with water and glass bowl half filled with water.

Poster

The poster * would need to be positioned where it can be easily viewed and if possible use A5 size prints for individual reflection

1. *Poster of the Washing of the Feet
by Sieger Koder available from www.pauline-uk.org

Music

Hymn Sheets can be downloaded from internet

Use of CD and CD player or I-phone for hymn accompaniment.

Gospel

In preparation to hear the Gospel it may be helpful to invite those present to listen and use their imagination and to place themselves in the story. In the silence that follows, they will be guided by the Holy Spirit to take on the role of Peter or Jesus or one of the apostles...

Poem

The Poem 'Water of Blessing' written by Michael Cauchi. Michael was inspired to write this poem after reflecting on the picture and the Gospel during a quiet time of reflection in his own home.

Action of the Water and Jug

During the action of the Water and Jug *silence* is very important to allow space for reflection and sharing.

Hymn

This Is My Body: As this hymn is sung we both hear it and sing it. It is Christ who is singing it to us in our own story today. The beginning and ending hymn are the same - sign of mission.

Close

Close service of reflection with sign of peace or blessing.

Action:8 Jug of Water

This action was first used by the Pastoral Care Project in a Care Home where residents and staff had asked for a service following 9/11. Organising a service for such an event for many faiths and residents, including those with dementia, was challenging. It came to mind a prayer experience we used during a service of healing on retreat and so it was adapted. This jug and water experience had a profound effect and it meant that everyone could participate. This action of the Jug and Water is often used and each time it brings forth a different experience. The example below is taken from a day of reflection with carers.

Those present were invited to take the jar filled with water and to pour the water into the bowl as an expression of their life, love, or service (whichever words apply) the half filled bowl represented the people of God.

Perhaps these words might be helpful. (Please feel free to use your own words)
"All of us are the hands, ears, eyes, feet....of Christ, and so He touches us through one another. We offer all that we are and all that we have , to be transformed into His loving body to be shared."

Action: Going forward individually, prayerfully take the jug and pour the water into the bowl as an offering of oneself.
(We are giving to Jesus the water which he will use to wash Peters feet)
We are also being reminded of our baptism.

This action when done in *silence* can bring about a depth of peace.

If there are people present who are unable to walk, take the jug and bowl to them.

A few comments shared from previous services:

"The picture of Jesus washing Peter's feet reminds me of when I wash my mother's feet. I am reminded of the care and love she gave me as a child."

An older person recalled how she could no longer stoop down to wash her feet and now she is dependent on others to wash her feet.

Another felt the Lord was really present. She had never used her imagination in prayer before and found this wonderful.

The service can be adapted according to the group and the venue.