

14th April 2022
Maundy Thursday

Feet

**“How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet
of him that bringeth good tidings.”**

Bible, Isaiah 52:7

I don't consider my feet to be beautiful. There's no need to explain why, or, indeed, to have a discussion about the relative attractiveness of my feet as compared to other people's. But for me, my feet are far from beautiful.

The prophet Isaiah, of course, was using the beauty of feet not in a physical sense, but as a powerful metaphor. Those feet are beautiful that come to you over the mountains with good tidings. This is the Good News we celebrate in Holy Week, and anyone who is the bearer of this Good News has beautiful feet. I know that! I've preached on that. But yet, when I hear the prophet's words, and more, when I hear them sung beautifully in Handel's Oratorio, *Messiah*, I cannot get past my dislike of my own feet.

This is Maundy Thursday, when we remember Christ's institution of what we now know as The Last Supper, giving us the modern-day Eucharist or Holy Communion. But it's also an occasion when we recall Jesus washing the feet of his disciples. I once attended an act of worship on Maundy Thursday when feet washing was part of the liturgy. Those who wished could go forward to the altar and have their feet washed by the priest. I never moved. Wash *my* feet? Not when I don't like them.

Peter didn't like having his feet washed either. We're told it's because he didn't understand Jesus being a servant. He struggled with the meaning of the metaphor. But I wonder if it's because, like me, he didn't like his feet, and didn't want the "unbeautiful" parts of him to be seen. Yet the meaning is that love is given to all of us, all *parts* of us, no matter what. Isn't the body of Christ broken for me, including the parts of my life I don't like? Didn't Jesus help Peter to see that head, hands *and* feet could be washed and blessed, even if *he* didn't think they were beautiful enough? Isn't that the purpose of Christ, the loving servant?

I don't consider my feet to be beautiful, but, on this Maundy Thursday, I give thanks that even those feet of mine that I don't like can be washed tenderly with the blessings of love. "How beautiful are the feet."

A prayer for today

All of me, Lord, needs loving. All of me matters to you. Amen