



iFollow Session 6: Loving God and Others



Song – The Servant Song by Richard Gillard

Brother, sister let me serve you.
Let me be as Christ to you.
Pray that I might have the grace
To let you be my servant, too.

We are pilgrims on a journey.
We are brothers on the road.
We are here to help each other
Walk the mile and bear the load.

I will hold the Christ-light for you
In the night time of your fear.
I will hold my hand out to you;
Speak the peace you long to hear.

I will weep when you are weeping.
When you laugh, I'll laugh with you.
I will share your joy and sorrow
Till we've seen this journey through.

When we sing to God in heaven,
We shall find such harmony
Born of all we've known together
Of Christ's love and agony.

Quote

'If I have no contact whatsoever with God in my life, then I cannot see in the other anything more than the other, and I am incapable of seeing in him [sic] the image of God. But if in my life I fail completely to heed others...then my relationship with God will also grow arid... Only if I serve my neighbour can my eyes be opened to what God does for me and how much he loves me.'

#18 Deus Caritas Est, Pope Benedict XVI, 2005

Prayer

Help me to grow less.
Less concerned by my wants
Less worried by my future
Less blind to others' suffering
So that you may grow more
More present in my life
Making me
More aware of my dignity
More trusting in your providence
More filled with love for all people
God of simplicity and abundance
Give me less and more.
Amen.

Evan Ellis/Caritas Australia

Scripture: John 1:4, 12-16

'Since I, the Lord and Teacher have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other's feet. I have given you an example to follow; do as I have done to you.'

Activity | Seeing Jesus in our world

Depending on your group and how you operate, this activity can either be done as part of your regular meeting time (although you may want to split it over two or more sessions), or on a retreat or camp. If you're doing it over a number of sessions, the group probably needs to be doing some work outside of sessions as well.

The task is to identify Jesus in other people in the local community, and create a short film or presentation using still photography that tells this story. Many young people have access to digital cameras or have the capacity to take stills and video on their mobile phones. Set the challenge for them to work in a small group to gather the footage and put it together into a simple presentation. If you're not sure how to do this, don't worry – some of your young people are likely to know. Some smart phones have the capacity to film and edit footage in the same application.

If you're doing this in a session, brief the group as a whole then split into smaller groups and get them to think of the kind of things they might expect to capture. Send the groups out to gather their footage. If they're editing footage on phones, they won't need additional equipment, but if not, they will need access to computers and editing/presentation software. This may have to be done at home, or in a library, if you do not have access to the equipment in your parish.

Potential footage includes people doing everyday things that we identify as Christ-like e.g. helping an elderly person carry their shopping, caring for a small child, donating something to people who are in need, being accepting of outsiders etc

Practical points:

- You may want to place a group leader with each small group while they go out gathering footage, or put other safety precautions in place to ensure you are maintaining your duty of care.
- It may be appropriate for the group to ask permission of people they film/take pictures of before they do so
- Knowing what you're looking for makes gathering footage easier – maybe each group can create a storyboard for their presentation, exploring five (or another number of your choice) possible scenarios. If they don't know how to get footage of the example they're looking for, maybe they could set something up and film it themselves?
- You're going to need to show the films/presentations once they are complete. You could show them using a data projector and laptop, or, if your group has a Facebook page or YouTube stream, you could upload the content to a relevant website and get people to comment or vote on them.

Tool | Washing of the Feet

The Washing of Feet happens in some form every year as part of the Holy Thursday liturgy, but most young people will not have had a chance to experience it personally. A simple and humbling act of service to each other is to replicate Jesus' actions at the Last Supper and wash each other's feet or hands. Knowing your group, and taking into account their cultural traditions, maturity and relationships, you may want to choose beforehand whether to wash hands or feet, or let them make the choice themselves.

You will need some large bowls or buckets with warm water in each one, and some towels (have some spares in case of accidental spillages).

Ask someone to read the scripture. Explain that we are going to engage in an act of service to each other, following the example of Jesus. Split your group into twos or threes and distribute a bowl of water and a towel to each group.

Invite them to take it in turns to wash and dry the hands or feet of the other people in their small group, paying attention to what it feels like to both give and receive.

This can be an incredibly powerful act, but the intimacy of it can be surprising, and often makes people feel a bit uncomfortable. Some laughter is to be expected, and is a natural response to feeling out of your comfort zone.

After everyone has had a go, debrief what the experience was like. Ask what they observed, how they felt washing/being washed, and why they felt that way. Ask what it tells them about discipleship and service, and if the experience has given them any new insights into Jesus, or his teachings.