

## Take-Home 6: Unless I Wash You

*Keep your Take-Home 1 sheet safe, guesses still folded. We will need it.*

### WHAT WE FOUND

On the night He was betrayed, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, Jesus rose from supper, tied on a slave's towel, and washed His disciples' feet: omnipotence, free for one evening to express itself, chose the lowest task at the table. Peter refused: "You shall never wash my feet." It sounded humble; but as the Fathers heard it, it was pride in humility's costume, still deciding what the Master may do, still preferring to serve rather than be served. And Jesus' answer was a non-negotiable: "If I do not wash you, you have no part in me" (John 13:8). The Gospel's order cannot be reversed: washed first, then sent. We traced the water back to Exodus 29 and 40, where washing was the first act of priestly ordination, and heard the Church's cherished reading: on the night of the Eucharist, He washed the men He was consecrating.

Then, at the same table, one sentence carrying a whole future: "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail; and when you have turned again, strengthen your brethren" (Luke 22:31-32). Satan asked for all of them; Jesus prayed for Simon by name. The sentence holds a fall ("when you have turned again"), a guaranteed return (when, not if), and a mission on the far side. Peter answered with a boast, "I will lay down my life for you," and learned about the cock. Sincerity measures tonight's feelings; strength is what remains at three in the morning. And one strange promise to keep in your pocket: "Where I am going you cannot follow me now; but you shall follow afterward" (John 13:36).

### VOICES OF THE CHURCH

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**St. Augustine** / *Tractates on John, Tractate 56*

Peter's protest preferred his own sense of propriety to his Master's declared will; the washing was no courtesy but a matter of having part in Him. We must be cleansed by Christ before we can belong to Christ, and refusing the gift, however reverent it sounds, is the one thing that separates.

#### VOICES OF THE CHURCH

**St. John Chrysostom** / *Homilies on John, Homily 70*

Knowing that all things were in His hands, He washed feet: the full consciousness of His dignity did not compete with the towel; it produced it. Our excuses for withholding lowly service all appeal to dignity, and the Lord of all has taken that appeal away forever.

## VOICES OF THE CHURCH

**St. Bernard of Clairvaux** / *On the Steps of Humility and Pride*

Pride does not always strut; it can bow, refuse gifts, and insist on its own unworthiness, because what it cannot surrender is control of the exchange. The soul that will not be served by God is not humble; it is still negotiating.

## LIVE IT THIS WEEK

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1. Once this week, deliberately receive: let someone do something for you without deflecting, repaying, or minimizing it. If you are Catholic and it has been a while, consider letting Him wash you in Confession, where His cleansing in this scene reaches you sacramentally, again and again.
2. Do one act of genuinely menial service, the kind with no audience and no credit, as apprenticeship to the towel.
3. Memorize the substance of Luke 22:32: "I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail; and when you have turned again, strengthen your brethren." Carry it into next week.

## SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

*"If I do not wash you, you have no part in me."*

**John 13:8 (RSV2CE)**

## BEFORE NEXT SESSION

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Read Luke 22:54-62, slowly. Next session matters; please be there.

**Catechism references from tonight:** CCC 1337, 1823, 2011.