



## 9. Humility

**Age range:** Primary

**Theme:** We gather as a community for collective worship that is **inspiring, invitational and inclusive**, reflecting the fact that we are a part of a diverse school family and the wider church community. This term, we are focussing on creativity, and the content of an exhibition being hosted in Surrey this term: **Threads Through the Cross**, the work of textile artist Jacqui Parkinson. We are mindful that relatively few schools will be visiting the exhibition, so are bringing it right into your collective worship in a variety of different ways. Whilst it might seem strange to be focussing on the salvation story at this point in the school year, we hope that the endpoint of Advent and Christmas will be more meaningful having understood the journey to the Cross. We will also be linking to many 'Autumn term' themes that are a natural part of school life as children settle in to a new term, getting familiar with routines, school values and key events. **This week, we continue looking at the Threads Through the Cross exhibition panels, and each week, we will have a similar section, a short time of 'gazing': no discussion initially, just looking and thinking. Then there will be some questions to think/talk about, and then an opportunity to talk and discuss before picking up on the key word linked with the panel – which is what will link into the life of your school. The panel for this week is based on two stories of foot-washing, and lead us into thinking about how we might better serve one another as part of our school communities.**



### How does this link to your school's Christian vision & values?

Each week, there will be a single word that will draw our focus to one particular aspect of either the textile panel or the story linked with it. You should easily be able to link the word to your school's values, but there will also be some suggestions included in the reflective questions as part of each week's materials. This week, we will think about the word **Humility**: how service and worship were expressed in two acts of foot-washing, which now often form a part of Christian worship during Holy Week. How do we try to serve one another in our school community – and how might we do it better?

### Resources:

- The PowerPoint slides are numbered with a point in the script so you can find your way, and the parts in **bold** show you where to click on to activate the next slide or animation. There are slides to go with today's script, but you could quite easily use some of this collective worship without the PowerPoint if you preferred.
- The story in today's script (p5) has the option for a prop in the form of a bowl of water, to be used during the retelling as shown in the script. You will also need to think of some examples of jobs that no one seems to like doing in your school community. From experience, this often seems to revolve around cloakrooms!!** There are lots of opportunities for talking together this week.
- As always, you can find out more about Jacqui's work here: <https://www.jacqui-textile.com/> There is also a video of her being interviewed by BBC NW News at Liverpool Cathedral, when all three of her exhibitions visited in January 2025: <https://www.jacqui-textile.com/bible/>
- In this resource, we include a final slide showing a similar piece of art from a different global tradition, giving pupils opportunities to both appreciate diversity within Christianity, and to see how Christians across the world reimagine this story showing Jesus 'like them' (which of course may mean like some pupils within our school communities). You may wish to use this slide outside of collective worship, enriching your RE provision.**
- There are also some ideas for reflective activities to ponder for use in your reflective areas for this term, listed at the end of the script along with a handy wall chart to print each week for your reflective area. You can find all these as a separate file in our resources area, which may make it easier for teachers to print and use in their classrooms.
- Reflective prayer activity:** no resources needed, other than your regular hand-washing provisions. As children wash their hands (we hope quite regularly during the school day!), encourage them to think about how they might better serve others in their class / school / community. You might like to put up the reflection cards above the hand basins in your cloakrooms this week!

### Gathering:

**Slide 1: Use the new greeting for this term.**



**Leader:** We are a creative community. As we gather together today....

**ALL:** May our thinking, talking and wondering help us to grow.

*Here are BSL actions for some of the words:*

**Leader's words:**

*Creative:* <https://www.signdictionary.co.uk/view/creative?q=creative#title>

*Community:* (we use the word 'gathering' as it's a simpler sign!) <https://www.signbsl.com/sign/gathering>



Gather: <https://www.signbsl.com/sign/gather> (1st video), or use the same sign we use for community as they approximate to the same thing!

**Response:**

Think: <https://www.brightbsl.co.uk/signs/think>

Talk: <https://www.signbsl.com/sign/talk> (1st video)

Wonder: <https://www.signbsl.com/sign/wonder> (1st video)

Grow: <https://www.signbsl.com/sign/grow> (2nd video)

**Engaging:**

- **Slide 2: Threads Through the Cross**

- **Slide 3: Would you rather.....** A few weeks ago, we played a 'Would you rather....?' game – and I've got one more dilemma for you as we start our time together today!....So, **Would you rather.....do something nice for someone else, or have them do something nice for you?**

*[Take some time to really ponder this together – you could do this with talking partners. NB There isn't a right answer!!]* Today's panels help us to ponder this question...

- **Slide 4: Washing of feet**

Spend a while just gazing at the panel. Relax, and focus on calm breathing....The two halves feature events just a week apart.

Can you spot some similarities and differences? e.g. in the people who are standing?

What are the people kneeling about to do?

Is the same person in both halves?

Can you see how Jesus is standing? What do you think he is saying in the way he is standing?

How is Peter standing? What do you think he is saying to Jesus?

*Now tell the two stories using the script on p5.....with optional water!*

Jacqui called these panels **You will be remembered** and **Do as I have done**.

*If children ask about the birds? Jacqui says....Macaw – symbolising the bright, bold actions of Mary!*

*Cockerel – a sign of what will come for Peter, who denies Jesus three times before the cock crows.*

- **Slide 5: Serve one another**

**....I wonder what both these stories might tell us about how we should treat each other?....**

Does this mean we should go around washing each other's feet – or do you think Jesus meant something else? *[you might like to talk to a partner]*

These stories about dirty, smelly feet are important examples for Christians of humble service, and Jesus' words 'What I've done, you do...' remind them that this is how he said they should live, humbly serving others whenever possible. During Holy Week, which is the week leading up to Easter, Christians all over the world will re-enact this foot-washing as a reminder that they are called to serve.

- **Slide 6: Serving one another in school**

**....I wonder how we might serve each other in our school family?....**

*[talk together about specific, small ways in which this might happen e.g. hanging coats up when they fall off cloakroom pegs; letting others choose the playtime game to play; making sure you keep the toilets clean so that they are nice for others to use etc. Maybe set a few challenges for this week for your whole school community!]*

**Slide 7: Responding and words for worship**

Jesus told his friends that each time they did a small, kind deed for someone else, even if it was for someone very unimportant or if no one else noticed, it would be as if they were doing it to him....and history is full of examples of how people across the ages have done this. \**[see below]*



As we draw our time to a close now, we're going to take the opportunity to think about what this might mean for us – and maybe make some promises to try to serve others this week.

....I wonder what we might learn from these examples of humble service?....

....I wonder how others might remember us because of how we treated them?....

This week, we will each be presented with many opportunities to serve others; we just have to notice them – and then act!

### Opportunity for reflection / prayer:

I'm going to pray now, and if this is something that you feel comfortable with, then there are some words you can join in with. These are.....

Slide 8: ....may we humbly serve others.

Slide 9: In our homes, with our families....

Slide 10: ....may we humbly serve others.

Slide 11: In our classrooms, with our friends....

Slide 12: ....may we humbly serve others.

Slide 13: In our playground, as we play....

Slide 14: ....may we humbly serve others.

Slide 15: As part of our school family....

Slide 16: ....may we humbly serve others.

Slide 18: Amen.

*[\*During the Black Death, Christians famously visited those who were afflicted with the plague, or buried the dead, often at great risk to themselves. Mother Teresa founded 'Missionaries of Charity' to serve the poorest communities in Calcutta. In 1811, Joshua Watson helped found the National Society with the dream of providing education for all, for free, as a bold act of service to the poor....]*

**Sending: Slide 19 (NB note different word from last week!)**

**Leader:** As we leave this place & time and go into the day ahead...

**All: Together, we create a serving community!**

BSL Together: <https://www.signbsl.com/sign/together> (1st video); serving: <https://www.signbsl.com/sign/serve>  
You already have signs for 'community'

**To listen to / sing:**

[Let our love show](#) (NBD) or [The Golden Rule](#) (NBD)



**Slide 20: Reflective areas – in your cloakroom!**

**Do:** As you are washing your hands....

**Think:** Where can you see an opportunity to serve someone today?

**Talk:** How did it feel when we cared for each other in this way?

**Slides 21&22: showing the footwashing stories from different cultural perspectives**

Link to original artwork: <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=56655> which includes some key information. This week, we have used a piece by British Pre-Raphaelite artist Ford Madox Brown, just because it's so beautiful – and Peter's face is so sulky! We have also included a very beautiful depiction of Mary Magdalene washing Jesus' feet from Indian artist Frank Wesley:

<https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=59187> so you will need to select which you use. Looking at these two creative interpretations of this part of the story may be something that links with your RE curriculum, reflecting the fact that Christianity is a global religion, encouraging pupils to appreciate the diversity that exists across cultures, traditions and geographical areas. It's important for pupils' wider understanding that they are given opportunities to think about how Christians show Jesus as being 'like



them', and that this important story for Christians is imagined in different ways across the world. It also creates an inclusive classroom environment, giving all pupils opportunity to see themselves in the art that they view.

You may wish to consider these questions:

- *What is the same? What is different?*
- *Which culture / tradition does the 2<sup>nd</sup> piece come from?*
- *Why do we think this?*
- *What questions might we want to / need to ask?*
- *If you were to create some art to express this story, what might it look like?*



## Footwashing

*Optional: a bowl of water (and a towel to dry your hands on after!) – follow the directions in the script. The words **in bold** link with the on-screen words, as usual.*

Today's stories are about washing! *[swish the water with your hand]*

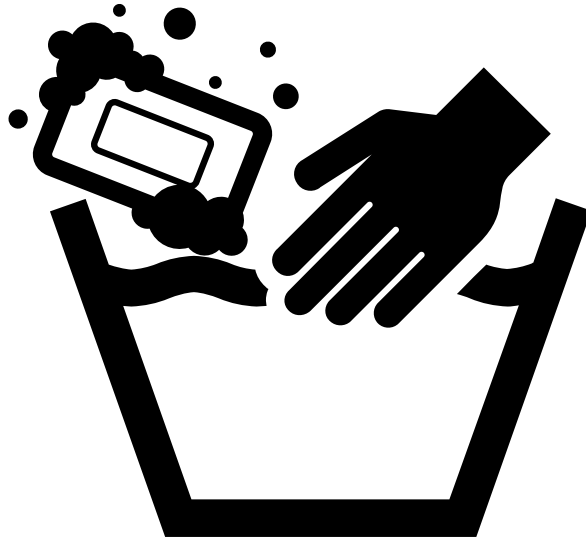
In Bible times, people walked everywhere – to visit friends, or to shop in the market, or to go to the Temple, or to travel to a different town. And they didn't have shoes like ours, to keep their feet warm – their shoes were more like summer sandals, with open toes, so the dust and dirt and mess of the roads got everywhere; over your feet and under your feet and between your toes!

So, maybe you can imagine how deliciously lovely it was to wash *[swish the water with your hand]* the dirt off your feet after a long journey, or even a day's work.....

Our first washing *[swish the water with your hand]* story happens in a house where Jesus had been invited for a meal with a man named Simon. No-one had washed *[swish the water with your hand]* his feet as was the custom for guests when they arrived, but while Jesus was eating dinner, a woman came in carrying a very expensive bottle of perfume which she poured extravagantly over his head. Then she washed *[swish the water with your hand]* his feet, not with water, but with her tears and dried them with her long hair. Jesus said to the astonished guests: '**She has done a beautiful thing to me... what she has done will be told in memory of her.**' which is why we are telling her story of washing! *[swish the water with your hand]*

Our second story takes place about a week later. Jesus and his friends were gathering for the Passover meal together. They were hot and tired from the day, and as they settled down to eat, it was Jesus' turn to do some washing. *[swish the water with your hand]* He took off his cloak, tied a towel around his waist, knelt down and with a bowl of water began to wash *[swish the water with your hand]* Peter's feet. Peter was horrified! '**You're not going to wash *[swish the water with your hand]* my feet, ever!**' he exclaimed. 'You are our master and our teacher!' But Jesus told him '**Unless I wash *[swish the water with your hand]* you, you have no part with me. What I've done, you do...**'





# Service



**As you are washing your hands.....**



**Where can you see an opportunity to serve someone today?**



**How did it feel when we cared for each other in this way?**

