

Forming One Body: Colossians 3.12-17

“Love one another as I have loved you”

(John 15:12b)

- **Colossians 3:12-17** **Clothe yourself with compassion**
- **John 13:1-15; 34-35** **Love one another**

Meditation

On the eve of his death, Jesus knelt to wash the feet of his disciples. He knew the difficulty of living together and the importance of forgiveness and mutual service.

“Unless I wash you,” he said to Peter, “you have no share with me.”

Peter received Jesus at his feet; he was washed and was touched by the humility and gentleness of Christ. Later he would follow Jesus’ example and serve the fellowship of the faithful in the early church.

Jesus wishes that life and love circulate through us as the sap through the vine, so that Christian communities be one body. But today as in the past, it is not easy to live together. We are often faced with our own limitations. At times we fail to love those who are close to us in a community, parish or family. There are times when our relationships break down completely.

In Christ we are invited to be clothed in compassion, through countless new beginnings. The recognition that we are loved by God moves us to welcome each other with our strengths and weaknesses. It is then that Christ is in our midst.

“With almost nothing, are you a creator of reconciliation in that communion of love, which is the Body of Christ, his Church? Sustained by a shared momentum, rejoice! You are no longer alone, in all things you are advancing together with your brothers and sisters. With them, you are called to live the parable of community.” [The Sources of Taizé (2000) pp. 48-49]

Prayer

God our Father,

you reveal to us your love through Christ
and through our brothers and sisters.

Open our hearts so that we can welcome each other
with our differences and live in forgiveness.

Grant us to live united in one body,
so that the gift that is each person comes to light.

May all of us together be a reflection of the living Christ.

Questions

- Can you think of a person in your life who you would identify as being “clothed in compassion”? Can you recall a time when you have been the recipient of compassion?
- How does your church community need to be more compassionate with members and visitors?
- What would it look like for the churches in your area to be more compassionate within your community? Where is compassion most needed in the world today?

Go and Do

(see www.ctbi.org.uk/goanddo)

Global: What action can we take in response to the compassion needed in the world?

Local: Consider making a banner or quilt together as churches and the wider community to demonstrate the things that thread and weave you together.

Personal: Consider the clothing in your wardrobe and the lives and hands that have touched them. Have these clothes been made with fair pay and good working conditions?