

This is my sixtieth Easter, and yet it seems as new and mysterious as ever. I want to pay tribute tonight to someone who is celebrating his eight-seventh Easter. For many of those years he has master-minded everything that happens here around this altar, especially during Holy Week and Easter. Tonight he is sitting in the congregation.

One of the features of getting older is the galloping of time. The days, weeks, months and years seem to pass quicker and quicker. Change is all around us; changes in the Church, changes in the way people think and behave, changes in our political life. We also need to pay tribute to the Coptic Christians of Egypt and Eritrea and Chaldean Christians in Iraq and Syria and to the peoples everywhere heroically enduring suffering of the most dreadful kind.

None of us find change easy. Accepting change means losing control.

“Never,” said Peter. *“You shall never wash my feet.”* Peter had very set ideas. Jesus is Master and Lord. Jesus is God. And God is the One who demands obedience and service from us, keeping the Law, coming to the Temple, coming to Church, saying our prayers, and everything in its right order and in its rightful place. And yet, here is Jesus proposing to wash Peter’s feet, to become Peter’s servant. Jesus is changing everything. The old order is passing. *“You call me master and Lord, and rightly, so I am.”* But it is precisely because I am your Lord and Master that I now come among you to **wash** your feet. God has come down from his throne. God is no longer waiting for us all to give him complete and total obedience.

Our God is the God who removes his outer garments, pours water into a basin and washes our feet. This is our faith. This is what constitutes the Church. *“I have given you an example so that you may copy what I have done to you.”*

This revolution, according to Jesus, echoes and fulfils the revolution played out *in the land of Egypt* several centuries earlier. The Passover story may well seem a bit bloody and gory. Indeed it is a bit bloody and gory, but that is not ultimately what it’s all about. What the Passover is about is the replacement of one form of life for another form of life, the replacement of subservience for freedom and new opportunities, the replacement of feeling stuck in one place for journeying and adventure. *“I am the Lord.”* It is God Himself who executes this revolution, this Passover.

So maybe for us, Jesus, and Christians believing in God, means to believe in change, to believe that God is always challenging us and leading us to new horizons, to believe that God Himself is always on the move and that therefore we must be on the move too.

The changing of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ is a sign and symbol of this changing, transformative and dynamic God. *The peace that passes all understanding* will come not from keeping things just as they have always been. The peace that passes all understanding means to go with the flow, not just any old flow though, but the flow of God, the flow that washes our feet, the flow that suffers and dies for us on the Cross, the flow that sweeps us along and transforms us into prophets and saints. A Happy and Holy Triduum to you all.

