

Gospel today gives us the "Jesus With Muddy Feet."

Today Jesus goes into deep water, almost over his head, to come out again, baptized by John.

He is muddy, and messy. Surely there is a deep symbolism here beyond the symbol of dying and rising. It means Jesus has entered deeply into the human situation with all its messiness.

This is good news for all the marginalized, the forgotten, the downtrodden, those who share the depths of human degradation, and messiness.

This week I led two funeral memorials. One was for a distinguished lady, Geraldine, a Dame of Malta.

The Knights of Malta go back to their founding in the year 1050! They are the only Knighthood left over from the Crusades since their mission was never war, but rather aiding the sick.

So Geraldine, though a distinguished Dame of Malta, got her feet muddy by participating in their good works, one of which was to help women escape prostitution.

The lesson from today's Gospel is if we are to follow Christ as he emerges from the mud, we will get dirty feet too. For the least of our brothers and sisters are in muddy straits. And it is in serving them that we serve Christ.

The other memorial was for Dawn, a homeless person who finally found a home at Ozanam House a shelter run by St. Vincent de Paul. She died penniless, with no family members, and would be buried in Potter's Field.

But she received the same prayers and respect as Geraldine did. And in my homily I remarked that her baptismal name "Dawn" was a symbol of better days to come and a new home in her re-union with Christ.

Other formerly homeless people attended and shared how Dawn who was 58, in a short time had blessed them with her presence. Their comments were very moving.

So both Geraldine and Dawn got muddy feet, each in different ways and both walked in the footsteps of the "Jesus With Muddy Feet."

Let us Pray:

Jesus with muddy feet,

help me to follow in your foot steps.

Help me to reach out to the muddled,

the weary,

the forlorn,

so that someday we may walk together

into Glory.

Amen

They always have had a mission to also enter into messiness and bring aid. One of their missions in Phoenix has been to reach out and help women trying to escape prostitution. Si Geraldine, belong