

February Leadership Message

When I began working at Catholic Charities, I asked another clinician about her experience working for the agency. She responded, “This is not just a job for me, it’s my vocation.”

A vocation, a calling, a particularly worthy dedication...

This has always stayed with me because not everyone considers their work this way. John, who defines himself as the disciple whom Jesus loved, recounts a calling given by Jesus in a story of service and love in John chapter 13:

“During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God, rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, “Lord, why do you wash my feet?” Jesus answered him, “What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand.” Peter said to him, “You shall never wash my feet.” Jesus answered him, “If I do not wash you, you have no share with me.” Simon Peter said to him, “Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!”

... When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, “Do you understand what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you... A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

Jesus takes on the role of a servant knowing he is in the presence of a friend who would betray him to death. Jesus humbly serves with confidence knowing his place with God and empowers us to do the same. It is not always easy to serve or to wash others. At Catholic Charities, we not only serve our community and colleagues, but we have the opportunity to live out a vocation of love according to this calling.

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