

E-DEVOTION FOR FEBRUARY 9

One of the many comments I have heard during this time of isolation due to the Coronavirus is... "I miss hugging people... I don't even shake hands with anyone." Especially for those who live alone, this has been so very difficult.

The sense of 'Touch'. It's essential. We need to touch one another. It's not about intimacy, but more the idea that we are 'in touch' with one another.

Jesus did it the best. When we read in John 13 about the Passover Meal, we can visualize that scene... "*Then he poured some water into a washbasin and began to wash the disciples' feet and dry them with the towel that was around his waist.*" Jesus KNEW that his friends, his disciples, would need to remember his touch during the difficult days ahead.

Virus or no virus, when we have the chance to see our grandchildren once again, I guarantee you that I will envelop them with the biggest hug I can give! I need to TOUCH those little people. I need to FEEL them in my arms.

Sometimes love feels very 'abstract,' doesn't it? We feel that we are so far away from one another. Some folks feel as though they will never experience the touch of another again. So... we remember. Just as the disciples, the friends, of Jesus were left with the memory of his touch. His hands washing their dirty feet. His arms wrapping a towel around them. It was a beautiful thing Jesus did.

We are also left with the memory of touch. Ever feel touched by the Spirit of God? Most certainly you have, as have I. Sometimes we keep those thoughts secured in our souls and when we need to remember a certain 'touch,' they come back to us.

It is so important for us all to remember that this 'touch' of God is upon our hearts and our souls each and every moment. As we rise in the mornings, we recall the words of our Baptism... being touched with the water and being named as God's child. One day soon we will surely be able to hug, to shake hands, to 'high five'... to touch one another.

But for now, wash your hands. Fold them and see your thumbs in the shape of that cross, bow your head and give thanks. Give thanks for the water, the washing away, the Word and God's loving touch.

Pray with me: "Dear Lord, in our alone times, in our lonely hours, we give thanks that You are right there with us. Washing us, wrapping us in your love. Help us to reach out to one another – the sad, the lonely, the afraid, the poor, the hungry. We are your 'touch' in this frightened world. Amen. In Jesus' Name, Amen.