

The NHS has been a powerful symbol of what service may mean to the point of death. As the current contagion passes over us, we see very clearly what matters in life. Those precious conversations with loved ones which may be the last; that last meal together which will be remembered for ever; the self-sacrifice of those who go out still, to serve us at home; so like the Passover families celebrating exodus. Few, perhaps, will see what they are doing in Christ-like terms, or even want to, but the symbolism remains; some risk death for the sake of saving others. When Jesus gathers his disciples for this last meal, their knowledge of what is taking place is as yet undefined by trauma. Jesus speaks and acts in a way that is not then understood and this may be true for us, too, in much of our Christian life, in much of the many eucharists we celebrate in memory of this one. We are waiting for a trauma to define us, for a whole series of evasions and denials to assail us first, so like Peter and Judas, before our true state, our real desire for God and one another becomes clear.

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