

April 14, 2019 – Palm Sunday - Cycle C
Father Larry Richards

Good Morning! How are you? Blessed. Today we celebrate Passion Sunday and it's the beginning of Holy Week as we all know. The second reading, again, we focus on a lot during this Passion Tide but it's from Philippians 2 and it talks about the great humility of God because it's the only virtue God chooses to have by, he has to choose to humble Himself for us and He does. So, we begin with Philippians 2 and it says, "Christ, though He was in the form of God did not deem equality with God something to be grasped at, rather He emptied Himself and took the form of a slave." So, this is what we need to focus on as we enter into this holiest week: the humility of God. The God who the universe cannot contain humbled Himself for us. You think about that humility of He who knew no sin became sin. He forgave those that were killing Him and spitting upon Him. He promised paradise to someone who was bad his whole life, you know, that stole heaven at the end. God on the cross was always more concerned about others, about us than He was about Himself. He chose humility for us. So that response, I think, for that humility of God is two things this week.

The first thing has to be a response of gratitude. I just want to encourage you that every day this week that you make sure you write it down and you do something to make sure you do it. You say "Thank You" for the cross. You say, "Thank You" for Jesus humbling Himself for us, for Him paying for your sins, my sins. For Him, instead of sitting there and saying, "I'm going to get back at you for all the things you did to me, I'm going to forgive you for all the things you did to me, but I'm going to take what you did to me and I'm going to take the penalty myself. Don't you deserve the punishment, I'll take the punishment." So again, everything that God does and did He did for you and for me. So to remind us this week that He does this because of love of us and we shouldn't just say, "Oh yeah, it's great. Thanks God. I have to do this again." Every day this week, we should say "Thank you – just thank you that you would do this for me who doesn't deserve it." None of us, of course, deserve it. So our first thing is the response to the humility of God is very simple: Thank You.

The second thing is that we ask Him that we learn this same humility because it's only through humility that any of us are going to go to heaven. Our pride isn't going to get it. Our opinion isn't going to get it. The only thing that's going to get us into heaven is when we learn to be like Him; when we learn that we empty ourselves like He emptied Himself and that we learn to forgive those who hurt us. We learn to be generous to those who are not generous to us. We learn to go out of our way to live for others instead of focusing and living for ourselves. This is something that's not natural to man. This is something we all need grace for. This is something we need to get beyond ourselves and say, "God, you got to make me like you, because naturally I'm not. Naturally I want revenge. Naturally I want only justice. Naturally I want to be selfish. Naturally I want to get back at people who hurt me." That's not the way of God and God proves that to us this Holy Week.

So again, first, thank you God that you would do this for love of me and two: make me like you. Help me to learn that humility which isn't concerned about myself but concerned about others, to live my life for others. So if we do those two things this week, I think Holy Week will be a great week for us because

then we'll become like Him who loved us and gave His life for us; that we can love Him and live our life for Him.

You got it? You get it? You gonna do it? May each of you know His love today and forever. Amen.