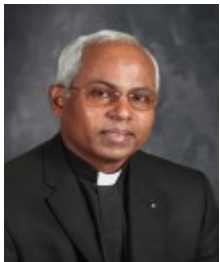


A Message From Fr. Francis



My Dear Friends In Christ!

Today's Gospel offers the ideal of dedication to the service of others as fundamental to Christian discipleship. Jesus came "not to be served, but to serve" and this example must always be a guiding light for his followers. He went about doing good, bringing justice, healing, forgiveness and kindness into people's lives. This is why those who believe in him are challenged to give themselves, their talents and their time, to the service of others without seeking any other reward than knowing that this is supremely worthwhile. The acted parable of the foot-washing at the Last Supper gives out the same message.

In practice what is the lesson to take away? He clearly said that he came to do the Father's will, and this thought stayed with him, even when it led to suffering and a cruel death. He was always about the Father's business, and made it his business. This prompts us too, with an active sense of duty, and a personal dedication to God's will for us. Normally, we discover our duty and God's will for us, not in world-changing plans or in heroic ideals but in the ordinary tasks of each day. At home or at work, or school or volunteering, we try to be aware of duty and a sense of dedication. Whenever we work in a casual manner, or fail to offer the needed helping hand, we fall below our personal call to service. What a change it would make, if there was a widespread return to this spirit, with regard to people's daily life. We need to be reminded that in rendering to others the service of a job well done we are imitating the serving Christ and being his fellow-workers in building up the kingdom of God on earth.

It is tempting to be selfish with our time and energy. There are so many plausible excuses for excluding ourselves from the work that needs to be done. How easy to join the many who just live for themselves and let society fend for itself. But today's scripture calls us to examine our conscience, and to face the question, "What can I do for my community, rather than what can my community do for me?" It is one of the most basic values we have to keep on learning throughout our lives. The approach of James and John, in today's Gospel, is not unlike the way many of us come to God. We approach him in prayer with the greatest passion, whenever we want something for ourselves. Jesus responds to their request with a request of his own, thereby showing that what he wants for us must take priority over what we want for ourselves. His will, as expressed in today's Gospel, is that we should share in his cup and in his baptism, that cup which he was to ask the Father to take from him, and that baptism of fire which he knew he had to undergo. His death on the cross was but the final expression of that total service which characterized the whole of his life. He lived "not to be served, but to serve." His life was a daily emptying of self, a self-emptying which was only complete when he gave his last breath on the cross.

**See you at Mass!
Fr. Francis**



The Patriotic Kaizen would like to honor all our special veterans at our Veteran's Day Mass on Tuesday, November 12th, at 8:00am. We would like to invite all veterans and their families to this special mass. There will be a special reception immediately following mass in Ross Hall.

