

# Spiritual Exercises for the 6th Sunday of Lent

## A reading from Paul's Letter to the Philippians

Christ Jesus, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped.

Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Because of this, God greatly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

*Do you make yourself the center of the universe? Do you require everyone to serve you, or are you willing to be of service of others?*

*We can think of this "emptying" in two ways. First, it is the divine humility of Christ that he is willing to stoop down and assume our humanity. Second, that he willing to pour himself out for the sake of humanity; that he is willing to give himself for others. Can you do the same?*

*How much are you willing to sacrifice for the sake of love and true happiness? How much are you willing to give for Jesus Christ?*

*Do you believe that in sacrifice, we discover true glory? That in giving, we receive?*



- 1) Is there anyone in your life who shows you how to be of service? What are they like? Describe them.
- 2) What is keeping you from being like Christ and giving of yourself?
- 3) Imagine the benefits and glory that you will receive when you learn to give of yourself? Imagine that you discover happiness greater than the things of this world. Write a letter to Jesus expressing your desire.

*Read the following passage from St. John of the Cross. Don't read it as a series of rules or moral absolutes that have to be applied in all situations, but rather as a series of thought experiments which help you to look past your limitations and encounter spiritual maturity in Jesus Christ.*

In the Ascent of Mt. Carmel , St. John of the Cross writes:

“Endeavor to be inclined always:

Not to the easiest, but to the most difficult;

Not to the most delightful, but to the most distasteful;

Not to the most gratifying, but to the less pleasant;

Not to what means rest for you, but to hard work;

Not to the consoling, but to the unconsoling;

Not to the most, but to the least;

Not to the highest and most precious, but to the lowest and most despised;

Not to wanting something, but to wanting nothing;

Do not go about looking for the best of temporal things, but for the worst, and, for Christ, desire to enter into complete nakedness, emptiness, and poverty in everything in the world.”

- 1) Use these maxims as a spiritual exercise to look past your preferences and opinions. Imagine the freedom that such an outlook could bring? Imagine the peace that would come when you are not the center of all things. Write a letter to Jesus about what you might do differently.
- 2) What mission might you undertake if you weren't attached to comfort? How might you be different in your family or in your job?

Jesus \_\_\_\_\_

Me \_\_\_\_\_

Jesus \_\_\_\_\_

Me \_\_\_\_\_

Jesus \_\_\_\_\_

Me \_\_\_\_\_

Jesus \_\_\_\_\_

Me \_\_\_\_\_