

Passion of the Lord – Cycle A (2008)  
Philippians 2:6-11; Matthew 26:14-27:66

As a child I didn't particularly like Palm Sunday. It was too long. And during the passion they always made us say "Crucify Him!" I didn't like saying "Crucify Him!" because it made me sad. Jesus was a nice guy and it wasn't nice to say this about him.

As a teenager and young adult I still didn't like saying "Crucify Him!" After all, it wasn't me who wanted him dead; it was those people who rejected him way back then, and all those people who continue to reject him today. It is not me.

Then I entered seminary and began studying the gospels. With this I developed a more adult understanding of sin and began feeling a bit of responsibility for my sin. But I was going to be a priest, and in the reading of the passion the priest often takes the voice of Jesus, so I would never again have to say "Crucify Him?"

Did you notice who had to say these words today? It was me!

Then three years ago, it really truly hit me, for perhaps the first time in my life. In watching Mel Gibson's "The Passion of the Christ," I realized it is me that crucified him. Every time I sin I say "Crucify Him!" Every single time we sin we say, "Crucify Him!"

And God says to us, "Okay! I will let you have what you want. I will let you crucify my Son, so that you will know the depth and breadth of my love for you.

This week, in our Holy Week liturgies, we remember the great love that God has for us.

So come! Come to our Holy Week liturgies, and experience the Father's love as you have never experienced it before.