

St. Louis Catholic Church

Wednesday of the 2nd Week of Lent

Jeremiah 18:18-20

Matthew 20:17-28

"Can you drink the chalice that I am going to drink?" This is the question Jesus poses to James and John after their mother seeks a place for them on the side of Jesus in His Kingdom. Christ informs them that places in the Kingdom are to be assigned by the Father. Yet if you want a place of importance then you must drink of the cup/chalice that I will drink from in the future.

He had already predicted and foretold that He would be condemned to death, mocked, scourged and crucified. Leaving the Last Supper Jesus said He would not drink of the fruit of the vine until He drank it in His Kingdom. In the Garden of Gethsemane He cried to the Father that if it was His will please take this cup from Me. The cup, of course, is the Crucifixion and Death of the Lord.

In this cup He becomes a servant who freely sheds His Blood and gives His Body for our salvation. He is the cup of salvation! He then tells the apostles and us that we too should become servants and slaves. Yesterday, He said if you humble yourself you will be exalted. If you want to be first or great or exalted then you must drink from the cup of giving your life for others and God's will. Christ reminds us that He came to serve not be served.

What is the cup He wants us to drink? It is first I believe to discern what God wants us to be and do with our lives. Sometime we decide what we want to become and fail to pray and focus on His way. To do what God calls us to be will require a sense of sacrifice. We will have to submit to what He wants rather than what we want. It can be a challenge to "our" expectation of what life is about. Jeremiah was called to preach and his life was mocked and threatened. Jeremiah wonders why is he getting grief when God sent him to do this work. Should good be repaid with evil?

Our cup may be a crisis that comes our way along the journey. Those crises are many--sickness, disability, loss of job, strife in a relationship, temptation, struggle with commitment, hurt by a religious person or experience at church, addiction and many more. The cross or cup is passed to us sometimes for long periods of time and sometimes at different intervals of our life. We too cry out to God to please take the cup from us but in faith we too are called to find God's will that is redemptive. Remember the cup of Jesus led to an empty tomb and new life.

The Christian Faith is a paradox. A paradox is not Kraus and Franklin. A paradox is when we lose we win. When we are humble we are exalted. When we are the least we are the most. When we die we live.

St. Paul spoke of the Eucharist in the New Testament and said "Is not the cup of blessing we bless a share in the Blood of Christ and is not the Bread we break a share in the Body of Christ?"

When we receive the Eucharist--Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity--we share in the life of Jesus and proclaim (make present) His death.

We then go forth to drink the cup in our lives--serving, humbling, pouring out self, dying to self, living for something beyond ourselves--and then we become GREAT!

God Bless,
Msgr. John McArthur

P.S. I plan to be in front of Planned Parenthood on Saturday morning from 11:00 a.m.-12:00 noon. Please come join me in praying the Rosary and quiet prayer and witnessing for the Sacredness of Life from Womb to Tomb.