

## Scripture Reading

### A Reading of the Letter of St. Paul to the Philippians (*Philippians 2:5-11*)

*Christ emptied Himself*

Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made Himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to death - even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted Him to the highest place and gave Him the name that is above every name, that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, 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. The Word of the Lord. R. Thanks be to God.

### Reflection ~ The Unequaled Greatness and Love of Christ

*Jesus emptied Himself and made Himself nothing.* For His Incarnation from Son of God to Son of Man, Jesus willingly stepped down from His heavenly throne before which myriads and myriads of heavenly angels render homage and adoration amidst great splendour and majesty. Jesus emptied Himself of all glory and honour which is His due as Son of God. He chose to be born of humble parents in the humblest of surroundings – a stable, not among nurses and specialist doctor in attendance but farm animals as companions. Jesus could have come as a great king born into great splendour and glory.

*Jesus emptied Himself and made Himself nothing.* At the Last Supper, Jesus wanted to teach His Apostles a profound lesson on how serving God is to be like, and at the same time cleanse them before receiving the Holy Eucharist. He rolled up His sleeves and went on His knees to wash the dirty feet of His Apostles! No master in his right mind would do such a radical thing! It needs a special brand of humility to do this act naturally and with great love that Jesus did. Jesus made a profound point that if we really want to serve God, we need to climb down from the pedestal our self-pride place us, make ourselves nothing, and only then can we put the needs of others before ourselves.

*Jesus emptied Himself and made Himself nothing.* At the Last Supper, the Sacred Heart of Jesus was torn by feelings of great love and mercy. Many loving thoughts presented themselves. His love compels Him to be with His loved ones all the time. His love wants to draw and include all those born after His time to be able to be present at and participate in the great Sacrifice that He is going to offer to His Father. He wanted to provide for the continuity of His Sacrifice for the many sins that will continue to be committed. And so, He instituted the Eucharist, an extension of His Incarnation so that He could always be present to His little ones by sight and touch. He is present in a little wafer, a little nothing!

*Jesus emptied Himself and made Himself nothing.* On the Cross Jesus was in need of all things. All His friends deserted Him. Even His clothes were taken from Him. His chosen people lowered Him beneath Barrabas, a murderer and thief when they clamoured for Barrabas to be released instead of Jesus. Jesus was crucified like a criminal between two criminals. Even His Heavenly Father deserted Him on the cross. His dead Body was put into someone else's grave. All these He did for the sake of LOVE.

Let me reflect on how I can be like Jesus. Can I empty my thoughts from all self-love, self-pride and judgement of others? Can I empty my heart from self-interest and be filled with love and care for others? Can my words and actions be stemmed from a heart that tries to serve God and others like Christ?

### Conversation with Christ

Precious Lord, I exalt You and magnify You for Your unequalled greatness. You are love and mercy itself. You set an example for me to follow. Humanly speaking, Your act is hard to follow but with Your grace, everything is possible (cf. *Philippians 4:13*). I am made to become like You. Lord, illuminate my conscience and show me how to overcome myself, develop virtues of holy love and holy humility so that I may serve You in others with joy and love. Help me discover my role in Your Mission - the plan of good works You have given me at my Baptism and Confirmation. Mary, Protectress of the Faith, come to my aid always. Thank You Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.