

Christ calls us to be **LAST** so that **HE** can make us first.

After reading these readings...'**I**' thought...  
"Tough sell...in a world where **SECOND** place is **FIRST...LOSER**"

We **know** that Jesus had **twelve** apostles, but we know...**very little**...  
about many of them. We know **Matthew, the tax collector, of course**—  
and **Doubting Thomas**—and **Judas**.

Something we might '**NOT**' know,...the **Big Three** were  
the brothers, **James and John**—and **Simon Peter**.  
**Peter, James, and John**—these **THREE** were the **only** disciples privileged to be  
present at the **Transfiguration** and **Gethsemane**.

Of the three, **Peter** was the natural leader—always **first** to speak out—**first** to act.  
Peter was **sometimes right**—sometimes **wrong**—but **NEVER uncertain**.

**But** James and John were '**NOT**' content to let Peter **run off** with the  
leadership prize.

In our Gospel lesson today, they got **Jesus** off to the side and said,  
"Teacher, we want you...to do for us...whatever '**WE**' will ask".

What a way to ask for something! "**Do whatever we ask.**"  
**Children 'ask'** like that—"Would you do something for me?"  
Parents **quickly** learn '**NOT**' to say '**YES**' until they learn what the children want.

So Jesus asked, "**What do you want 'ME' to do for you?**"  
They responded: Grant to us **that** we may sit,  
one at your **right** hand, and one at your **left** hand, in your glory.

When you **heard** this,...where did your **thoughts** center?

Our readings today focus on the **concept** of **Servant Leadership**.

Interesting concept. **WHICH COMES FIRST??**

The **leader** that comes to **serve** and take away **OUR** pain? ... '**OR**'...

The **Servant** who '**LEADS**' by taking the pain of others **away**.

**SERVING, rather than being served-**

Christ is **asking** his apostles (**AND "US"**) to put some **SKIN** in the game –  
To give **'UP'** our notion of getting what we **deserve** and **'ABOUT' 'SEEKING'**  
the **LEAST and the LOST** to **serve them** and put **THEIR NEEDS before** our own.

It is a **'concept'**...that we may wrestle with –  
our natural inclinations **frequently** urge us to **'GET'** more,  
**'DO'** more, **'BE'** more to get ahead...but hopefully,...  
there exists in **each of us "THAT"** yearning to imitate **JESUS** –  
to **answer** that **'INVITATION'** to **'SERVE'** rather than be served.

**YOU MIGHT ASK** – but where **IS THE PAYOFF IN THAT???** ---  
Just as the **apostles** might have.

The answer...sometimes...**isn't pretty** ---

**Dying** to SELF, **Being** the **object** of ridicule or disgust.  
Some suffer **martyrdom** (for example...the Apostles, Bishop Romero)...  
imitating Jesus style of leadership ..... **BUT**...  
there **'IS'** the **GLORY.....**  
**WE** are **ALL 'OFFERED'** eternal life in giving **THIS** life for **OTHERS** in small ways,  
or sometimes in large.

We heard about **Isiah's** Suffering Servant ....**Who** gives his life for others.  
From **Hebrews**: **Jesus** compassionate High Priest who  
has **'SIMILARLY'** been tested in every way YET without **sin**.

Finally, James and John, **the sons of Zebedee** – who **clearly** see themselves  
**'AS'** Leaders **first...bent** on securing seats on Jesus  
**right** and left when he comes in his glory.

The anger and annoyance of the **other ten disciples**,  
who have their own issues with Jesus' path to **suffering** and **death**  
**'LEADS'** **JESUS** to offer the Gospel's definition of **Servant Leadership**.

**"Rather...whoever wishes to be GREAT among you...WILL BE 'YOUR' SERVANT**  
**Whoever wishes to be 'FIRST' among you...will be the SLAVE of all...**  
**for the Son of MAN did not come to 'BE' SERVED**  
**BUT to SERVE**

and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

The **church**...in **every age** has needed to **relearn** this **principle**.

In our own time we've seen the **necessity** of **conversion**  
to **servant leadership**...within the **hierarchy** of the church.

**Pope Francis** has consistently **challenged** bishops and priest  
to “**SERVICE**” rather than **privilege**.

May the **Holy Spirit** move **powerfully** in the church **today**  
to **GIFT** us with **TRUE** servant leaders.

#### **AND FOR 'US'**

We '**ALL**' have something to **GIVE**.

So if you **know** how to read, **find** someone who **can't**.

If you've got a **hammer**, find a **nail**.

If you're '**NOT**' hungry, '**NOT**' lonely, '**NOT**' in trouble—  
**seek** out someone who is.