

GATHERED INSPIRED SENT



In a sermon on the marvel of the Incarnation, the great father of the Church, St. Gregory Nazianzen writes:

“He who makes rich is made poor; he takes on the poverty of my flesh, that I may gain the riches of his divinity. He who is full is made empty; he is emptied for a brief space of his glory, that I may share in his fullness.”

Who of us has not felt emptied these last ten months? Because of the global pandemic that touches everyone, we have been emptied of all that was once normal for our lives. Work and school routines are mostly confined to new spaces we have created in our homes. We experience the friendship of others through electronic means. Daily, our concern for our health and safety, and that of those we love, increases as the COVID-19 virus spreads quickly. The Sunday liturgical encounter with our parish is via livestream. Prayer has become far quieter and more alone because our parish churches are closed. In ten months, we have been emptied like no other moment in our lives. It is new and scary, uncomfortable and different. Yet, as Christians, being emptied should not be a totally new reality for us. Our faith is predicated on the Holy One, Jesus, who emptied himself for us.

St. Gregory captures this reality well. He profoundly reminds us that Jesus, who is

CALLED TO SERVE

ORDER OF FRIAR SERVANTS OF MARY
Vocation Newsletter

full of everything holy and good, emptied himself by becoming like us in all things but sin so that we could be filled with divine holiness and goodness. While God could have accomplished our salvation in another manner, God knew that we need

some stark reminder of our invitation to become holy and good. What better reminder is there than to look upon the all-holy and life-giving Cross to see the Holy One who emptied himself that we could be filled with God's very life: holiness





and goodness. It was not enough for us that Jesus lived like us, experiencing our hungers and thirsts, our aches and pains, our dreams and longings. God needed to become empty that we could be full. The true meaning of Christmas is that God so loves us He was willing to be emptied that we could be full of His life and love, or as St. Gregory preached, "He takes on the poverty of my flesh, that I may gain the riches of his divinity." Our faith in God is centered on this fact of God emptiness and our richness.

As we navigate these strange days full of great uncertainty and unsettling uneasiness,

abundant life. Yes, the pandemic is scary, but God is bigger than the pandemic. As we take the necessary precautions to stay safe, let us remember that God walks this pandemic with us.

As you continue to discern that Lord's call for your life, especially the call to Servite religious life, ask yourself what you need to empty from your life so that you can experience the fullness of God's love? Ask the Lord to be with you in this prayer. Ask Him to show you what you need to empty from your heart that you can become full and whole. Then, pray for the courage to follow where the Lord desires to lead

He who is full is made empty; he is emptied for a brief space of his glory, that I may share in his fullness

Vocation Directors

Fr Donald Siple, OSM
donaldsiple@servitesusa.org

Mr Eddie Murphy
vocations@servitesusa.org

follow



we can learn to become comfortable with being emptied. We know that when we empty ourselves of all that is unnecessary in our lives, we become rich in having what we truly need: love, mercy and kindness. Throughout the ordeal of this pandemic, we continue to hear heart-warming stories of the kindness of one to another. You and I have been the recipients of the kindness of others. Acts of kindness, be they great or small, is part of the process of self-emptying that another may be full. Acts of kindness is our willingness to learn from the Lord what true joy is, that in dying to self, we become better, more whole. Acts of kindness is our willingness to love as Jesus did by "laying down our lives for another." In death comes life. This is true when we empty our lives of selfishness, self-serving agendas and grandiose unrealistic dreams to give love to another. Our true richness is in letting God empty us of what is not holy and good, be this emotional, spiritual or physical, to fill us with the fruits of Spirit which produce abundant joy rooted deeply in God's love. The emptiness of this pandemic should be a bit easier for us because we know that being emptied gives God the place to fill us with all that He knows we truly need for a joyful and

you. Know that we Servite Friars are praying for you. On Christmas, you and your intentions will be remembered in our prayers and Masses. Our Servite life is a great adventure of living and serving God, of being emptied that we can fill the lives of others with God's everlasting love. Will 2021 be the year that you join us in this adventure? We wish you a reflective Advent, a blessed Christmas and a happy New Year.



Called to Serve, #40

© 2020

ORDER OF FRIAR SERVANTS OF MARY