

Jesus emptied himself. Saint Paul stresses this in his letter to the Philippians. Crucifixion was a horrible torture, but Jesus accepted it, as part of an entire life in which continually he emptied himself.

This started even before he was born. The entire Trinity existed before the creation of the world. Paul says that Jesus – before he was born – was already “in the form of God, but he did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave.” Jesus was born not just a human being, but the lowest kind of human being. The one who had the form of God took on the form of a slave. Out of love for us, Jesus accepted all the pain that humans can have: suffering, dying, and an embarrassing death on a cross.

In doing this Jesus gave us an example. We all know about self-sacrifice; we do it every day for people we love. But sometimes we cut corners. We seek to comfort ourselves rather than someone else. Jesus did it a different way. He emptied himself. If we want to love God and love our neighbor, we must do the same.