

Crucifixion was an execution for slaves. Jesus was no ordinary slave. He was the Son of God.

Today's second reading explores this paradox. Paul says Christ had the status of God, but he emptied himself and took the form of a slave. It was not God's nature to become a slave; it was God's nature to be God. But Christ became like us. We are slaves to sin and slaves to death. We will all make mistakes, we will all hurt other people, and we will all die. God is not like that. God is not a slave to anything, but Christ became like a slave to death. Christ became obedient to death, death on a cross.

Because of this, God greatly exalted him so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend in heaven, on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

In his crucifixion, Christ is a slave; in his resurrection he is Lord. The slavery of Jesus has unfettered our slavery. By undergoing a human death, God incarnate redeemed humanity. We have no fear, for Jesus Christ is even Lord of death. Now death is only a doorway to heaven, where we can confess the lordship of Christ to the glory of the Father.

Jesus took on the form of a slave, and so can we. It is not our nature to be obedient to others, but when we are, we can lift the burdens they bear. My brothers and sisters as we enter this holy week, let us do what Jesus did. Let us look for ways to take on the form of a slave, so that those who have less or can do less might be free.