

Palm Sunday

Pride is a vice we Christians are to avoid. It draws attention to ourselves, feeds our own desires, and steals the good we could otherwise do for others.

Jesus had every reason to be proud. The Letter to the Philippians says he was “in the form of God.” Our pride reflects an unrealistic self-image that we too are in the form of God. We’re not.

Yet, Philippians continues, Jesus “did not regard equality with God something to be grasped.” He did not cling to it. “Rather, he emptied himself... and found human in appearance, he humbled himself.” Being human can teach us humility. When Jesus accepted humanity, he accepted death, and a horrifying death on the cross. He forsook pride and adopted love for you and for me.

Philippians then says that “Because of this, God greatly exalted” Christ Jesus. He has even more reason to be proud, but only because love moved him first toward humility.

As we enter the final week of Lent, we may recall Ash Wednesday, the day we admitted we are human, we commit sin, and we should avoid pride. For five weeks our penances have made us humble, aware of our lack of self-discipline, and honest before the face of God. This week, let us practice humility out of love for those around us. Our love for them will move us away from grasping a false self-image of our own merits and toward a sincere desire to use our gifts so that others may have life. Let us imitate Christ.