

Today, on the Sunday after the Holy Cross, the Gospel of Mark 8:34-38; 9:1 is proclaimed. In this Gospel we hear Christ's words that if we would like to follow Him, we must deny ourselves, pick up our crosses and follow Him. He continues to say, "For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? For what can a man give in return for his life?" It is whoever wants to save his life that will lose it, He tells us, and whoever loses his life for the sake of Him and the Gospel will save it.

Dearest ones of God, what does it mean that if we save our life we will lose it, and if we lose our life we will save it? Let us think of it this way; when we try to protect, save, fortify our lives with earthly means, then it is here that we will lose it. But, if we lose our life by accepting to serve, suffer and sacrifice for the sake of Christ and His Kingdom, then we will save our life through eternal salvation.

Our greatest goal in life should be creating a personal relationship with God. We should try to deny or refuse anything that may come in conflict with this relationship. We must reject our egocentric behaviors on various worldliness and focus our attention to God alone. When this is done, it is a life lived in divine love; unconditional love from our God, and then sharing this love with one another creating life-giving relationships.

This is not an easy path, and it will most likely not be comfortable, but it is one that leads to life eternal! Let us choose to live a life of purpose fostering a deeper relationship with our God and with one another that is both life-giving and life-changing. Let us pick up our crosses as Jesus Christ commands and journey together dearest ones of God; in his name let us pray, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and always and forever and ever, amen.