

So on Palm Sunday, we considered that no matter how much Jesus was jeered, spit upon, beaten, mocked or belittled – he continued to walk the path of light – making himself a blessing, a beatitude, a source of God’s grace and goodness to others.

Now we can add betrayal and denial to that list: showing all the more that no matter how much someone abandons him – Jesus will remain faithful to his calling.

One of the books I am reading these days is by Sister Mary Kathleen Glavich entitled: I am Going.

What Sister Mary Kathleen has done is to research what the last words saints said before they died – and then wrote a little reflection on them – saying how we can live with the same attitude, the same dispositions, as the saints, and grow in our holiness.

For instance, Saint Agatha, who lived in the second century said right before she died: *Lord, my creator, you have protected me since I was in the cradle. You have taken me from the love of the world and given me patience to suffer. Now receive my spirit.*

Saint Francis of Assisi said: *I have done what was mine to do; may Christ teach you what you are to do.*

And, St. Lawrence, living in the second century and who was martyred by being burned on a grate over a fire – taunted his torturers by saying: *My flesh is well cooked on one side. Turn me to the other . . .*

Sister Mary Kathleen did not report on what the last words of St. George or St. Jude were. . .

Most of the saints, and probably most of us, if given the opportunity, would say something profound as our last words – something that kind of summarized our lives – or stated what we value or what we had given our lives to.

So on the night he was betrayed – on the night before he died – Jesus could have preached a long sermon, given an extended lesson on his teachings, or recited a litany of his many accomplishments.

What he did say was very brief: DO THIS: and then in actions that spoke louder than those words – he showed them what “this” is: he got down on his hands and knees and performed a shocking act of hospitality, reserved to servants to perform: he washed the feet of his disciples.

The message to be gleaned for us in Jesus’ words and actions before his death --- is that we make the kingdom of God present by our service to one another. . . that we experience the love of God in our lives by the love we show one another. . . that in allowing our actions to speak louder than our words: people will come to know that God is present in their midst.

May we, with the help of God’s grace, and the strength of the Eucharist that we receive --- continue to walk the same path as Jesus: choosing to walk in the light of creative altruism – rather than straying into the darkness of destructive selfishness. . . remaining faithful to the one who was obedient unto death – even death on a cross.