

## **Homily for Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord, March 25, 2018**

**What do a Loyola University nun, a French police officer and those who have helped in our homeless shelter project all have in common? Their willingness to sacrifice.**

**98 year old Sr. Jean, chaplain for the Loyola University men's basketball team, is admired for her long life and her life-long commitment to her faith. Sacrifice. Over the past 4 months we have had over 100 volunteers, I like to call them disciples, who have fought the cold and wet weather and stayed up late at night or into the early morning hours in order to provide a warm place for the homeless to rest at night in our community. Sacrifice. And on Friday Arnaud Beltrame offered to take the place of a hostage in a terrorist attack in a supermarket in a small town in southern France, freeing one but losing his own life as a result. He is lauded as a hero for his self sacrifice.**

**Sacrifice is at the core of what we remember on this day and through Holy Week. Jesus prays Psalm 22 from the cross, *"My God, my God, why have you abandoned me? Why so far from my call for help, my cries of anguish?"* He sacrifices not only through his teaching and simple life and standing up in the face of cruel authority, but through his own utter humiliation and pain, offering his very life in sacrifice.**

**We get this word from the root words in Latin for sacred, "sacrare" and for make, "facere". When we sacrifice we "sacer facere", that is, we make sacred, we make holy. Jesus' whole life is about making holy – making us and all creation holy. When we sacrifice for others we sacrifice for God and we offer the best example of Jesus Christ to our world. Imagine if all humankind could, in one great act of love, sacrifice for one another, our whole world would change, it would become what God intended it to be.**

**In Philippians 2, just before the beautiful hymn we heard proclaimed in our second reading about Jesus emptying himself, St. Paul wrote while in prison himself: *"If there is any encouragement in Christ, any solace in love, any participation in the Spirit, any compassion and mercy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, with the same love, united in heart, thinking one thing. Do nothing out of selfishness or out of vainglory; rather, humbly regard others as more important than yourselves, each looking out not for his own interests, but everyone for those of others."***

**Jesus Christ is what makes us most holy, and most human and to be fully human, like Jesus Christ, is to be fully loving.**