

In the military, we would receive major evaluations every six months, and lesser evaluations every three months. Part of a Sailor's preparation for his "E-val" was to write what we called a "brag sheet."

Now this wasn't just a resume or curriculum vitae. We were encouraged to take credit for anything and everything we had done. There were guys who would appear on paper to have trained the entire squadron twenty four hours a day. When they were asked how they had done this ... they'd reply that every morning they went around and asked each person if they had any questions about their work that day. Then the "braggart" would round that couple of minutes conversation UP to the nearest hour, and by the end of three months of rounding up every day, he had more hours worked than there were working hours!

We tend to brag when we're insecure about something, or when we want to impress someone.

Some people are compulsive braggarts, and are usually not sought out for conversation at social events.

In today's Second Reading, St. Paul tells the Galatians:

*May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ ...*

Which should give us pause. In the light of the Cross of Jesus, we can find TRUE security ... the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ is something that should impress us all.

It is in the Cross of Christ that we find salvation ... it is in the Cross of Christ that we overcome temptation and sin ... it is in the Cross of Christ that all grace and mercy flows out to us through the Sacraments we have received.

Our own sufferings, even if endured on our own terms – or especially if we take them out on others – are useless ... Yet our personal sufferings united to the suffering of Our Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross have tremendous value.

The First reading speaks of comfort.

Let us seek comfort in the Cross of Jesus Christ.

Only in uniting our crosses to the Cross of Christ can we hope to be worthy ministers of the Gospel. Because the Gospel without the Cross ... or the Gospel separated from the Cross ... is a false Gospel devoid of spiritual power.

Today as we approach this altar to receive the Sacred Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ, let us plunge ourselves into the flood of grace and mercy flowing out of the Cross of Christ.

Let us unite ourselves as members of the Body of Christ with the Cross of Christ.

Let us pray for the openness to receive God's grace and mercy which is poured out upon us as the sons and daughters of the Father, redeemed in Jesus Christ and by His Cross, and receive and be filled to overflowing with the grace and power of the Holy Spirit.