

Gerald Marks and Seymour Simons wrote a catchy little tune in 1931. It is now considered an old standard - if that is a good thing. It's been recorded by such greats as Bing Crosby, Louis Armstrong, and Benny Goodman ... not to mention Ella Fitzgerald, Dean Martin, and Frank Sinatra. It's been re-covered by a punk-rock group, there is a contemporary acoustic version, and it's even been sung by the Muppets.

The song in question is titled "All of Me."

It begins:

*All of me, why not take all of me
Can't you see I'm no good without you*

And it concludes:

*You took the part that once was my heart
So why not why not take all of me*

We are often defined by the things we love. Someone may sit for hours in a cold garage rebuilding a classic car ... another may spend weeks working on a quilt or an afghan. Another may collect old vinyl albums. Or perhaps have a stack of favorite Louis L'amour westerns they like to read over and over. It could be sports statistics - fantasy football. Or maybe exotic recipes - or gourmet cookbooks?

We call them hobbies ... or interests ... but they can become a bit consuming at times.

Which brings us to today ... the Second Sunday of Lent.

In the first reading, we hear of the "binding of Isaac." Despite the detail in the story, Abraham never kills anything but a sheep. But the point of reflection is - what is it that you love more than God? Or in another vein - what is it that stands between your love for created things - including people - and your love of the Creator?

In the Gospel, we hear again about the Transfiguration. Just as our Lord begins to reveal His ultimate mission to His disciples - that is - the Cross ... He allows them to witness His glory. Sort of an inoculation against the despair they may feel at seeing Him so dejected ... so damaged ... so destroyed ... in His Passion.

And Saint Paul, in that beautiful passage from Romans reminds us that Christ's Death is only half of the equation - and that His Resurrection is what is important for Christians. And that "*if God is for us, who can be against us?*"

Here we are in Lent. Giving things up. Is it expensive coffee - and instead we drink instant for 40 days? Or is it chocolate? Or maybe a favorite TV show.

Yet these small sacrifices somehow fail to reflect the total surrender to God that will make us Saints.

In the Gospel, we hear the voice of the Father say to the disciples - and I dare say to us as well:

"This is my beloved Son. Listen to him."

And I think that can give us a clue as to the type of surrender we might try as we ascend this "mountain of Lent."

Oftentimes our prayer or devotional time can hinge on whether or not we finished this page. And we give a few seconds to silence - or we're uncomfortable with the silence - and we jump up and plunge into our day.

I would offer the challenge - that if our prayer time takes 20 minutes - or if we read Scripture for 30 minutes - or if our Rosary takes 15 minutes ... that we add on an equal amount of time - quiet time ... silence ... to "*Listen to Him*" ... "*Listen to Him*" ... as we continue toward Easter.

We've made it through 10 days of Lent so far - 25% ... a nice start. But let us not grow weary as we ascend the mountain of Lent 2012. Let us increase our desire to draw ourselves into the mystery of Christ's life and passion ... let us not get tired this early ... and may we also be ready to receive the graces ... the transforming graces ... that He has in store for us.

Let us resolve to give God "all of me" so that we might receive ... in turn ... the graces that He so desires to pour out on us ... for our salvation.