

Over the past 10 years, there has been a series of books titled *The Worst Case Scenario Handbook*.

In these books are such helpful topics as: How to wrestle free from an alligator; How to escape from an angry gorilla; How to survive nuclear fallout; How to land a helicopter; How to fend off a shark; How to escape a mountain lion; and How to escape from quicksand.

It is important to note that when confronted by an angry gorilla, you should make yourself as small a target as possible, and stay quiet and submissive. Yet when dealing with a mountain lion, you should make yourself appear as large as possible, wave your hands, and shout.

I don't expect that many of us will have to deal with angry gorillas or wild mountain lions in the near future. And perhaps Jesus' words in the Gospel may have a similar effect on us:

“[W]hoever does not take up his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me.”

Jesus' use of the cross is twofold: while ultimately alluding to His own suffering; crucifixion was one of the most cruel forms of execution in the ancient world.

Jesus isn't just saying, whoever is not willing to die for me is not worthy of me ... but rather, he is taking “death” and making it the most gruesome and cruel death possible.

Which then begs the question: to what extremes are we willing to go in order to follow Jesus Christ in our lives? How far are we willing or able to go in order to submit to and obey the Will of God? What is the worst case scenario that will have us turning our backs on the Cross and our discipleship in Jesus Christ?

Are we willing to receive the graces poured out on us in order to be worthy disciples of Jesus? Are we willing to love as God Loves us? Or are we torn between our own will and the Will of God?

Saint Maximilian Kolbe used to tell his friars that in each of us there is only room for one “will.” We can choose only one “will” – that is, we can choose our own will; or we can choose God's will.

Let us pray to receive the graces, the supernatural helps, that allow us to be worthy followers of Jesus Christ – sons and daughters of the Most High God, filled with the power of the Holy Spirit.