

We stand at the cusp of Holy Week, leading up to the three-days of the Great Paschal Triduum.

And we have just listened to the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ from the Gospel of St. Mark.

In the face of such a stirring account – the suffering of Jesus on the Cross. The betrayal. The denial. The scourging. The crowning with thorns. And the crucifixion. Who cannot be moved?

Six chapters earlier in St. Mark's Gospel, Jesus says:

*Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.*

Are we prepared to do just that?

It is all too easy to deny the cross ... to deny Jesus ... and to follow our own will.

Are we ready ... to deny our very self ... take up the cross ... and follow Jesus?

As we continue into Holy Week ... and as we approach this altar to receive the Sacred Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ ... let us pray for the spiritual fortitude ... and the courage ... to deny your own self ... take up your cross ... and follow Jesus ... all the way ... to the end.