

## **Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time - 02-23-2020**

“Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you considers himself wise in this age, let him become a fool, so as to become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in the eyes of God...”

Scripture tells us that the cross was a stumbling block to the Jews and foolishness to the Greeks.

The fact that Greece is the cradle of philosophy – which literally means the love of wisdom – should be very telling.

The cross was foolishness to the Greeks. For them and for the Jews it was the opposite of human wisdom but not for God.

God is all-wise and he is also all-powerful. And yet he chose to manifest his love through the cross – the surest sign of weakness in the eyes of the world.

Jesus is God. He is equal to the Father and the Holy Spirit in all things, he is all-wise and he is all-powerful but His is a humble power.

So let's consider the power of God's love.

According to Pope Benedict XVI, “Christ does not hold on to equality with God as a thief holds on to his booty, as power captured...that can be enjoyed to excess.”

“The thief’s way of thinking, which corresponds to the conventional idea of power, is in fact the very indication of powerlessness.”

“What has been stolen does not really belong to him, and that is precisely why he greedily uses it and selfishly defends it.”

What has been stolen can always be taken away by one more powerful.

“Jesus’ entire existence is the translation of power into humility...into obedience to the will of the Father.”

“Obedience is not secondary for Jesus, but forms the core of his being... For his power there is...no limit coming from the outside, but only one from the inside...: the will of the Father freely accepted.”

“It is a power that has such complete control over itself that it is capable of renouncing itself.”

“Jesus’ power is power based on love, love becoming powerful. It is power that shows us the way from all that is tangible and visible to the invisible and the truly real of God’s powerful love.”

“It is power as way that has as its goal setting people on their way: into the transcendence of love.”

“You have heard that it was said, *An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth*. But I say to you, offer no resistance to the one who is evil.

When someone strikes you on your right cheek, turn the other one as well.”

However, turning the other cheek is not the same as turning a blind eye to the evil around us. We must speak out and resist in obedience to the Father’s will but should those who disagree with us come after us at some point we need to emulate Christ and be willing to make the ultimate sacrifice of love.

“You have heard that it was said, *You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy*. But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you...”

This is the transcendent love that Pope Benedict XVI is referring to and it is infinitely powerful. It is a power that has such complete control over itself that it is capable of renouncing itself and nobody can take that away by force.

This is foolishness in the eyes of the world but for those who belong to Christ it is the wisdom, power and love of God.

It’s not supposed to be easy. And if anyone thinks they have arrived at this wisdom – the transcendent love of God – take heed and listen once again to the words of Saint Paul.

“Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you considers himself wise in this age, let him become a fool – a fool for Christ – so as to become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in the eyes of God...”