

FEBRUARY 28, 2020  
Friday after Ash Wednesday  
Matthew 9: 14-15

### IMITATE CHRIST

The Season of Lent already started last Ash Wednesday, wherein the imposition of ashes reminded us that on the cross, we were saved. We embark on this season, examining what we can give up, how we can give away or how much food, chocolate, meat, soda or gossip we can prevent and avoid for those forty days. As we look at it, that is not enough for us Christians. What is the intent of Jesus Christ when He says: "Take up your cross and follow me"? It is not only giving up but sharing more. It is more about being Christ to others, more about serving the poor, the sick, the dying.

In our readings for today, the people during the time of Jacob and John the Baptist's disciples are thoroughly focused on their own interest and upon themselves. "In both readings, God is trying to make clear what the purpose of fasting (or, in fact, any type of penance) is. On the surface, when we fast, we are imitating Christ, who fasted for forty days in the desert. Whenever we carry out works of penance by denying something we want, we are imitating Christ who denied his own life for our sake. But on a deeper level, through our penance we are clearing out our souls. We are clearing out of our soul those desires which serve only ourselves. The more and more we remove these desires, the more room there is in our soul for the desires of God, the fruit of which are the works that He wants to accomplish within us and through us."<sup>1</sup>

So, let us ask in this Eucharist that we may learn humility and gratitude for the sacrifice Christ made for us. May we live in humble prayer, fasting and be generous to other though words and deeds.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.catholicsermons.com/daily\\_reflections](http://www.catholicsermons.com/daily_reflections)