

# Quinquagesima

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Date: 15 February 2026

Preacher: Fr. Wade Miller

[0:00] We heard from our collect this morning for quinquagesima, which simply means about 50 days until Easter, that without charity, all our activity is worth nothing.

! The word charity here is translated in our modern tongue as love. And as we heard and are familiar with from this very familiar text of 1 Corinthians chapter 13, without love, without charity, we are nothing more than clanging cymbals.

In other words, without love, we are noisemakers, not people who are practicing godly virtue. This is transparent in our day where everyone uses the term love to mean anything, but few think about anyone other than him or herself.

As Christians, our calling is not to be a part of the noise of our culture. We are not to be clanging cymbals that use the term love while living in constant bitterness or competition towards others.

We are called to practice true love, true charity towards our neighbor. And our gospel text this morning provides us a very clear picture on how we are to do this.

[1:35] Our gospel text of Luke chapter 18 speaks of Jesus telling his disciples that his journey to Jerusalem is quickly coming to its conclusion.

He says, Our Lord came to demonstrate the very heart of love by showing true love in giving up his own life for ours.

Jesus came to be scoffed at, ridiculed, ending in his torture and death before he would rise from the dead. And he did this.

He did this for you. But we read the response of the disciples here in verse 34 with those words, But they, the disciples, understood none of these things.

This saying was hidden from them, and they did not know the things which were spoken. You see, the disciples came to believe that Jesus is the Messiah.

[3:10] The issue was not a lack of belief. It was the fact that their belief was wrong about the Messiah. They saw the Messiah merely as a warrior king who came to vindicate Israel from her enemies.

They did not understand that the Messiah came to die on a cross. Therefore, torture and death were not on their radar.

Resurrection was just as foreign because the immortal king would never see death in their outlook. Instead, the Messiah was coming to crush his enemies.

That's why the scene of our gospel reading shifts to a blind man. Jesus hears a blind beggar calling out his name.

The man cried out, Jesus, son of David, have mercy on me. The disciples and others tried to quiet this man. But the man cried out even louder.

[4:17] Son of David, have mercy on me. And after asking this blind man what he wanted, our Lord then said, Receive your sight.

Your faith has made you well. We then read those words, and immediately he received his sight and followed him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.

The point that's being made this morning is that love is not merely something we go around saying. It's what we receive in Christ.

And then it's what we are to do. We are to give because we are in Christ. Our Lord came to give his own life for the sake of the world.

He came to open the eyes of those blinded to the truth. And it was the disciples here who were really blinded. They did not grasp why our Lord came.

[5:30] And they did not understand that charity is to be given to others, especially to this poor, begging blind man. The irony of our gospel reading this morning is that it is a blind man that shows us what it means to really see.

To believe that Jesus is the son of David, the Messiah and ruler over all, who came to bestow mercy upon those who seek him.

He came to give life by giving his own life. He came to open the eyes of those blinded to the truth that he is indeed the savior of the world.

And as people who have been illuminated by Christ through holy baptism, we are now called to practice charity, love towards others.

So that the light of God extends to all those around us. Since we are not singing any hymns this morning, this feels very much like Lent.

[6:45] I want to do something a little different. I want you to take the hymnal in front of you and turn to page 421. Page 421 in your hymnal.

Don't worry, I'm not going to attempt to lead us in singing this hymn. That would be a train wreck. But I ask that you follow along as I read these beautiful words.

These words are better than any sermon I could ever give. Page 421. Oh love how deep, how broad, how high.

How passing thought and fantasy. That God, the son of God, should take. Our mortal form for mortal's sake.

For us baptized, for us he bore. His holy fast and hungered sore. For us temptation sharp he knew. For us the tempter overthrew.

[7:47] For us he prayed, for us he taught. For us his daily works he wrought. By words and signs and actions thus.

Still seeking not himself, but us. For us to wicked hands betrayed. Scourged, mocked, in purple robe arrayed.

He bore the shameful cross and death. For us gave up his dying breath. For us he rose from death again.

For us he went on high to reign. For us he sent his spirit here. To guide, to strengthen, and to cheer. All glory to our Lord and God. For love so deep, so high, so broad. The Trinity whom we adore forever and forevermore.

[8:50] During this time that we enter into Lent, may we reflect in awe and in humility on what God has done for us in Christ Jesus.

And may we also ask God to help us to be his hands, his feet, his mouth to others. And serving others in charity, in love.

Amen. In the name of the Father and of the Son of the Holy Ghost. Amen. Amen.