

► Sunday, September 14, 2008, Triumph of the Holy Cross

*Num 21:4-9; Ps 78:1-2, 34-35, 36-37, 38; Phil 2:6-11; Jn 3:13-17*

Week #4: Main Theme: We are made for self-gift. Marriage, priesthood, and religious life are all about self-gift.

Today's feast focuses our attention on the great means of our salvation, the Cross of Jesus Christ. The Cross shows the ultimate basis for the truth that the Second Vatican Council emphasized: "[M]an ... cannot fully find himself except through a sincere gift of himself." God is love, and He gives of himself completely, all the way to death on a cross. And He continues to give of himself in the Eucharist, which makes the sacrifice of the Cross present to us here and now. We are made in his image. We can only fulfill ourselves in imitating Jesus' self-giving. Remember what Pope John Paul II used to say: "Be not afraid!" Be not afraid to give of yourself completely in love! For most of us, this is done in the vocation of marriage. For some of us, we give ourselves in the generous acceptance of the priesthood or religious life. In whatever path, we are given the great gift of being made free enough to give ourselves to God and to others. Let us recommit ourselves today to following our crucified Lord, in order to find ourselves in his Resurrection, in which the enemies of love—sin and death—are finally overcome.

**Bulletin: "Just as the Incarnation of the Son of God reveals its true meaning in the Cross, so genuine human love is self-giving and cannot exist if it seeks to detach itself from the Cross."**

**Pope Benedict XVI, 6/6/2005**