

**Homily – Saturday of the Fifth Week of Lent
Mass for Hope for the Future Donors – March 23, 2024**

“You know nothing,” said Caiaphas. He was right! The chief priests and the Pharisees were willfully blind to the identity of the One they wanted dead. They saw a man who threatened their position and their sense of security. Before them stood the Son of God; the God of Abraham, Jacob, and Moses. The high priest prophesied beyond his own understanding: *“it is better for you that one man should die instead of the people, so that the whole nation may not perish.”* The Son of God became Man to give his life as a ransom, so the People of God would not perish. Through his Passion, Death, and Resurrection, Jesus liberated us from sin and death, and gave us a share in his own life.

Do not all of us spend our lives seeking security? We naturally seek to strengthen our position in life and ensure that those who come after us have a better future. However, we are never quite satisfied. Such is life. *“What are we going to do?”* was the cry of the Sanhedrin. *“This man is performing many signs. If we leave him alone, all will believe in him, and the Romans will come and take away both our land and our nation.”* Their calculations stand in the way of God’s gift for them. Their anxiety reminds us of our own limits. However, it is precisely our limits which allow us to believe that the God who created us also saves us. God saves us from ourselves!

This scene of the Lord’s trial confronts us with our inner tension between human calculations and God’s plan for us, between earthly reality and our ultimate hope. The Paschal

Mysteries of our salvation bring our generosity into perspective. Is our giving merely at a human level or is it a participation of Divine Providence? At the core of stewardship lies our calling to self-gift. We are called to be truly co-responsible for one another. As the Lord gives us his Body and Blood for sustenance, He calls us to strengthen our sense of belonging to Him through each other. We are a priestly people, and shepherds of one another.

Fellowship and stewardship are two aspects of the image of God in which we are created. We are transformed into the likeness of the Triune God to the extent that our communion with God is strengthened by our love for each other. Our need for salvation and our call to be conformed to Christ – the perfect image of the Father – reveals our call to be open to the Holy Spirit, who works to make us more like Christ through love. Pope Francis has said: *“The gesture that enables progress in a society, a family, a neighborhood, a city, everyone, is to give oneself. It is not merely giving alms but is a giving of self that comes from the heart. It is a gesture that drives away selfishness and the anxiety of possessing. But the Christian way of doing this is not a mechanical way, but a human way. ... tenderness is the very sign of Jesus’ presence. Approaching others to walk together, to heal, to help, to sacrifice oneself for others.”* Thank you for being a sign of Divine Providence for so many children and families in our Catholic Schools! Thank you for the tenderness of your generosity! Thank your for allowing the Holy Spirit to work in you and through you!

Our Lady of Guadalupe, teach us to be generous after your own heart and the Sacred Heart of Jesus.