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By [Bro. Bobot Apit](#)

Suffering and martyrdom are forms of service, not punishment. Done in faith and for the love of God, it is called blessedness!

YAHWEH EL SHADDAI, thank you for the power, presence and the gifts of the Holy Spirit which enable us to continue serving you, even in the midst of difficulties the grace to discern the root of these difficulties. In Jesus Name! Amen!

M atthew 20:17-28 As Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the Twelve disciples aside by themselves, and said to them on the way,
(18)

“Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death,

(19)

and hand him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and scourged and crucified, and he will be raised on the third day.”

(20)

Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee approached Jesus with her sons and did him homage, wishing to ask him for something.

(21)

He said to her, “What do you wish?” She answered him, “Command that these two sons of mine sit, one at your right and the other at your left, in your

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kingdom.”

(22)

Jesus said in reply, “You do not know what you are asking. Can you drink the chalice that I am going to drink?” They said to him, “We can.”

(23)

He replied, “My cup you will indeed drink, but to sit at my right and at my left, this is not mine to give but is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father.”

(24)

When the ten heard this, they became indignant at the two brothers.

(25)

But Jesus summoned them and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and the great ones make their authority over them felt.

(26)

But it shall not be so among you. Rather, whoever wishes to be great among you shall be your servant;

(27)

whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave.

(28)

Just so, the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Meditation by Fr. Benny [Tuazon](#)

The late Jaime Cardinal Sin adopted Serviamus his motto. He meant to spend his episcopacy in service of God and the faithful. Even in sickness, he still performed his ministerial functions as archbishop of Manila and cardinal of the Pope. I saw how he struggled and winced in pain whenever he would celebrate Mass or ordain new priests, yet he never complained. He knew that it was part of his service. When he was ill, fewer priests dared to approach him to ask for a vacation.

Cardinal Sin would always ask them why, and if they gave tiredness and sickness as reasons, the Cardinal would always point to himself who needed more rest and is definitely more sick than they were!

Intrigue beset the Apostles of Jesus when the mother of Zebedee's sons asked the Lord to secure for her sons prime positions in the Lord's Kingdom. Jesus took the opportunity to give them a lesson on service. He asked them if they could drink the cup that He would drink, that is, to go through what Jesus would go through. Even if they answered yes, Jesus still reminded them that it will be a grace from the Father. It is not meant for everyone, but when given, hopefully, the receiver will accept it.

Then came the meat of the Lord's message. Citing the lordship of the rulers and authorities during His time, He told His Apostles that the Christian way is different. He used the powerful image of the slave to tell them what Christian service is, which is always to wish and ascertain the good of the other before one's own. Self comes least and last. In John's words, "He must increase. I must decrease."

Following Christ is no picnic in the park. He was honest enough to tell us what's in store for us. For this reason, many left and abandoned the faith. But many remained and persisted for the same reason, too. Suffering and martyrdom are forms of service, not punishment. Done in faith and for the love of God, it is called blessedness! **Fr. Benny Tuazon # # #**

GOD BLESS US ALL!

O Theos Na Mas Evlogisi!

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PRAY as if everything depended on **HIM**. **ACT** as if everything depended on **YOU**. – **Bobot Apit**

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