

**HOMILY 13<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY ORDINARY TIME**  
**JUNE 28, 2026**

Your tire goes flat. One reaction is, “that is the last thing I needed today.” Another reaction is, “okay, lets figure this out. Maybe I need to watch a video to refresh my memory on how to change the flat. Maybe I just need to call AAA.” There is more than one way to look at the situation, and some are more helpful than others. When difficulties happen, it is easy to ask, “why is this happening to me?” It is easy to become bitter. But that is not the only reaction. It may be better to ask, “what can I learn from this situation?” One reaction sees a problem; something is broken and now we are stuck. The other sees a puzzle. There is something to work out and maybe we can, or at least we could get a good story out of it. The same flat tire, but a different ride home.

In the Gospel reading we hear, “whoever does not take up his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me.” This does not mean that we should look for difficulties or create crosses for ourselves. Life brings plenty of crosses. But it can make a difference on how you frame the cross. Do we ask why me and become bitter, or do we look at it as an opportunity to learn something? We also hear “Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever losses his life for my sake will find it.” Do we have a detailed plan regarding how our life should go and become embittered if it does not go our way? If that is how we frame it, we are going to be very unhappy. But if we are willing to lose our life or let go of our plan and accept God’s plan, we will end up in a better place.

I do not think that God causes bad things to happen in our lives to punish us or to test us or to make us unhappy. But when bad things happen, he will make some good things as a result if we let him. I have learned to trust God. And we do not always recognize the goodness at the time. An example from my own life. My father died when I was 15 years old. As a 15-year-old that was difficult to learn the grieving process and how to adjust my life accordingly, and I did. My sister

was just 3 years old at the time. My mother had to go back to work, so I had to take on a lot of responsibility for raising her. That was a lot of responsibility for a 15-year-old, but I developed a really close relationship with my sister, and that was really good. I did not know it at the time, but I would never have children of my own. That experience with my sister gave me a sense of what it was to raise children, and I am grateful for that experience. Another cross, my father was a milkman. I started working with him on Saturdays during the summer when I was just 5 years old. I did not always like getting up at 4:00 in the morning to go to work but at 5 years old I did not have much choice. As it turns out, I only had my father for a short time, but I had all of those days working with him that I would not have had if he had another job. I am thankful for that extra time I had with him. Difficulty came from my father's death, but a great deal of goodness came too. Goodness that I did not necessarily recognize at the time, but I recognize it now.

If I were to ask you, "what made you the person you are today?" you probably would not say "that Caribbean cruise that I took a years ago. That changed my life." Not that I do not love Caribbean cruises but that just is not a life changing event. My guess is you would tell me about one of the difficulties in your life that you were able to work through, one of the crosses. The crosses usually involve change, and we do not like change, but for our lives to become better we need to be able to die to the life we have now to make room for something better. How do you frame the crosses in your life? Do you trust God? That is what is going to happen with the restructuring of the Archdiocese of Detroit. We need to let go of the Church as we know it today so we can end up in a better place. So how will you frame that? Can you frame it in a positive way? Can you trust God? Same flat time, different drive home.