



## Places of Honor

3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of Lent

**Mark 10:35-37, 41-45**

*James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came forward to him and said to him, 'Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.' And he said to them, 'What is it you want me to do for you?' And they said to him, 'Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory. . . ' When the ten heard this, they began to be angry with James and John. So Jesus called them and said to them, 'You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, and*

*whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.*

**T**hey still didn't get it. Jesus was talking about suffering, rejection, and death, and still they dreamed of glory and power, riches and honor. Specifically, James and John sought to beat the other ten to making claims on the places of greatest honor in the coming kingdom—the right and left hands of the king. When the others heard of it, they were incensed. James and John had not given up anything more than they had to follow Jesus. James and John were not anymore capable than any of them—at least by their estimation. Who did they think they were?

Jesus, though, rather than chastising them for their obtuseness, pointed out that in the kingdom of God, unlike the nations of this world, greatness is measured not by the power to control others, subduing and humiliating them, but in service to others. Those who figure greatest in the sphere of God's gracious rule are paradoxically, from the world's point of view, very often the least among us who give generously of themselves in the service of others after the example of Christ who "came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." By this standard, who in the circle of your life is truly great?

### Prayer

Help me, Lord, to live my life this day and every day in such a way that you can use me, use me most fully. Amen.