

Homily
Friday of the Second Week of Easter
April 12, 2024

Did you enjoy March Madness this year? Did you get excited about all the games, especially for your favorite team? Did you tell your friends and family about the triumphs or tragedies you witnessed game by game, play by play, shot by shot? I used to get excited about March Madness. In college, my friends and I would spend the entire weekend, beginning on Thursday, watching all the round one and round two games while eating and drinking, cheering and shouting. What happened to me? Now I couldn't even tell you who won the whole thing.

I suppose if I had any skin in the game, I might be a little more interested in the outcomes of all 63 games, 126 games if we include the women's bracket. But I lost interest years ago. I became more interested in other things, such as Palm Sunday, the Triduum, and now the Easter Season.

The Apostles were excited about being arrested and suffering for the name of Jesus Christ. It didn't deter them, but only emboldened them. The Apostles never stopped teaching, preaching and proclaiming the Christ in the temples and in their homes. If only we were so excited. Can you imagine being arrested and beaten for our faith and told to be quiet about it?

What gets you excited? We are called to love God and love our neighbor as ourselves. We are called to take the gifts God has given us, hone them and use them to make the world around us better. And we are called to be grateful in all things, even those things that are hurtful in our lives.

Being a Christian isn't easy. Life is hard. Anyone who tells you otherwise is fooling themselves and lying to you. But Jesus shows us a better way. Jesus gave us the tools we need to follow Him. He gave us the Sacraments to heal and strengthen us. He gave us the cross to help us carry our burdens. And He destroyed death and restored life that we may eventually join Him and the host of angels and saints in His heavenly kingdom, if only we would get excited and shout our joy, no matter the consequences.