

Emulate God, work together

February is one of the toughest months. December is filled with Christmas spirit. January begins a new year, with new hopes and dreams. But February brings cold and sleet and snow and rain. This year, February concludes with the promise of Lent fast approaching.

We all love the celebration of the birth of a child, the birth of our savior. But no one looks forward to death, especially the death of our savior. Lent leads to Good Friday.

Yet, for all of the challenges of February, they remind us that we have survived tough times before. Jesus didn't come to make life easy. He came to help us believe that life is worthwhile.

Our culture would have us believe that life is about looking out for ourselves. Jesus came to tell us that life is about looking out for one another.

As we look back at history, humanity has survived ice ages and earthquakes and fires and famines. We survived because we banded together. Together we could hunt more effectively. Together we could farm and raise cattle. Together we could protect each other.

And Jesus came to tell us not only that life is better if we work together, but that we are most like God when we work together. He came to tell us that looking out for each other is not only helpful for life, but also for eternal life. "I came so that they might have life and live it more abundantly" (Jn 10:10).

The miracles that Jesus worked were not for himself, but for others. We humans can imagine a superhero, rather than a God who would be vulnerable to suffering and death. Yet, Jesus chose to go through suffering and death to let us know that love is stronger than anything else.

The poet Gerard Manley Hopkins wrote, "The world is charged with the grandeur of God." There is a divine energy that flows through all of life. There is a divine energy that flows through all of us. That energy is released when we are self-giving. That energy is blocked when we are self-absorbed.

And so we will pass through life's winters. There will be spring again. Remember: "I came so that they might have life and live it more abundantly." That is the promise of Jesus. There will be spring after winter. There will be Easter after Lent.

There is divinity flowing through us all the time. We just have to believe that. And then winter will turn to spring.