

June 2014

Homily of March 10th, 2014. "Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful" (Lk 6:36)

Fr. Shuanghao Liu

College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University, obsculta@csbsju.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/obsculta>



Part of the [Christianity Commons](#)

ISSN: 2472-2596 (print)

ISSN: 2472-260X (online)

Recommended Citation

Liu, Fr. Shuanghao. 2014. Homily of March 10th, 2014. "Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful" (Lk 6:36). *Obsculta* 7, (1) : 45-48. <https://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/obsculta/vol7/iss1/5>.

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@CSB/SJU. It has been accepted for inclusion in *Obsculta* by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@CSB/SJU. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@csbsju.edu.

HOMILY OF MARCH 10TH, 2014. “BE MERCFUL, JUST AS YOUR
FATHER IS MERCIFUL” (Lk 6:36)

Fr. Shuanghao (Simon) Liu

I used to think that if somebody would ask me what my life journey in America looks like, what would I say? I would say it is trouble, trouble, and trouble. It seems like it has always been uncomfortable, uncontrollable, inconvenient, and unconfident. I remember on my first flight coming to America that I experienced my first trouble on that journey. My flight was transiting in the Istanbul airport in Turkey and I had been refused admission to the United States because I forgot to bring my student ID with me. I had to buy a new ticket to return to China so that I could get my student ID. So I journeyed back, but the trouble was not yet finished. When I arrived at the Shanghai airport in China, I could not find my checked in baggage. I searched for five hours for my baggage. I checked with the airport staff and they suggested to me that it was better for me to go back home and wait for news. I did as they had told, but I had not gotten news of my baggage even as I left for America for the second time. I arrived successfully the second time because I had my important student ID with me. One month after I arrived, I finally got news of my baggage.

In my human experience, trouble is frequent. While my meals are no longer a problem, my study is still trouble for me. Because of the cultural difference and language problem, I had a difficult time in class and in communicating with people. For example, at my English as a Second Language (ESL) program at Gonzaga University, a program that helps promote English speaking and listening skills for international students, the school arranged to have American students be conversation partners with international students to practice face-to-face dialogue twice a week. My first conversation partner was an American girl. She was nice and kind. But because of the difficulties I had with the cultural change and language, after ten minutes, we had nothing more to talk about. I felt very shy and nervous and could not find any topic to continue the conversation with my practice partner. I felt like I wanted to flee from the dialogue, and so I did.

Such experiences are familiar to my close friends who share my daily life and my journey of studying in America. I used to ask myself why I went to study in America, left home which is so far away, and went through such uncomfortable, uncontrollable, inconvenient, and unconfident experiences. What is the meaning of my homesickness, loneliness, and helplessness? What is God's plan for me? What is God calling me to on this journey? Eventually, I began to realize that through this life journey, I have learned from all those challenges and difficulties. I am able to face and understand the human condition and the humanity that I have inside. I have been able to experience so many friendly Americans - friends, teachers, classmates - who I have met because they have reached out to me during my times of trouble and given me so much help. It is through this life journey of studying in the United States that God calls me to open

myself and others to our mutual human condition and humanity, and to open ourselves to the grace of God Himself.

Therefore, when I reflect on today's gospel, Jesus says, "be merciful, just as your Father is merciful" (Lk 6:36). His words mirror life which reminds me that mercy is not gained from the merits that we have earned from God, but on the contrary, it is from the gift that God bestows upon us. It is through this gift that we are able to open and accept one another in our mutual human condition and humanity. As it is in this journey of Lent, these same human experiences and stories may enable us to reach out to one another, and to those who are in need, with love, charity, understanding, compassion, and support. May it especially give us the encouragement and the strength to live in a faith and worship community on this short earthly journey towards the eternal kingdom of God.

