

For any parent who has kids, or for that matter, any of us when we were kids, there was the inevitable call from mom or dad who would ask “who can help ... ?” or maybe “who did this?”

Then the cries of “Not me!” “Not me!” come out of the mouths of the kids, much to the consternation of the parents.

This is such a common response, that in the comic *The Family Circus*, there is an invisible character named “Not me!” who mysteriously breaks all kinds of things around the house but then eagerly volunteers for every unwanted job.

In today’s and yesterday’s Gospel we hear of Jesus’ statements to the Apostles during the last supper in regards to his betrayal: “Amen, I say to you, one of you will betray me.”

And the responses from the Apostles is one after the other, “Surely it is not I, Lord?”

“Not me!”

Yet, Judas betrayed him, Peter denied him, and nine others ran off and we’re not even sure what they did besides hide. And only John is recorded in one Gospel as staying nearby throughout Jesus’ entire Passion and Death.

And even we, as adults, can be prone to the “Not me” syndrome.

This is expressed in a semi-humorous way on the placemats in Chinese restaurants ... you know the ones, with the Chinese Zodiac on them. The one I’m thinking of says something like “Clever? Wise? Patient? Sounds like me! Irritable? Selfish? Annoying? Must be someone else!”

It is important for us to realize that we often tend to see the best in ourselves and the worst in others – while at the same time missing the worst in ourselves and the best in others.

As we move into the Triduum, the three days leading up to Easter, let us pray for an openness to realize as the prophet Isaiah says, that it was “our infirmities that [Jesus] bore, our sufferings that [Jesus] endured” ... “[Jesus] was pierced for our offenses, [and] crushed for our sins” ... yet “by his [wounds] we were healed.”

Let us pray for first a recognition of our need for a Savior, and second for a deep sense of gratitude for what lengths Jesus went to for our salvation.

And as we complete our journey to Easter, let us draw closer to the cross and to Jesus Christ, and be truly healed as we go from Holy Thursday to Good Friday to Easter.