



Father Danny Murphy is a retired Pastor from Brooklyn NY. A gifted man with a God given talent to inspire and God's gift to us at Holy Cross Church in Vero Beach Florida. This is just one of his inspirational homilies.

Fr. Danny Murphy – 31st Sunday of the Year 2016

This morning, God forgive me, I am not going to be reflecting on the scriptures. Instead, I am going to share with you two stories that I read recently that hopefully will help us lead fuller lives. Our first story is a parable. One day, God said to this man: "Ask me for any three things and I will give them to you, but after those three, I will give you no more." I'm going to continue the parable in a second, but a parenthesis, so you don't get distracted when I'm telling you the parable. This parable is NOT about Dan Kroger, our Music Director because, if God said this to Dan, Dan would say: "Well, I got music, I got rhythm...who could ask for anything more?!" This is NOT about him, so I'm going to get right back to the parable! So, God goes to the Man, right, and says: "Ask me for any three things and I will give them to you, but after these three – nothing more." At once, the man says: "I would like you to allow my wife to die, so that I might marry a more virtuous woman!" And immediately, God granted the request! But at her funeral, the man heard so many people commenting over and over again on the wonderful qualities that his wife

possessed and the man then realized that he had been blind to her many virtues and that he had been way too hasty in making his request. So, he asked God to bring her back to life.

Now the man had only one request left! And he knew he couldn't make a mistake, because if he made a mistake this time, he couldn't correct it. So he consulted widely: "What should I ask for?" Some suggested, "Ask for immortality." Others countered, "What good is immortality if you don't have good health?" Still others claimed: "What use is good health if you don't have money?" And still others chimed in: "Well, what good is money, if you don't have friends?" And on and on it went and the poor man didn't know what to ask for.

So he turned to God and prayed: "Dear God, please advise me, what should I ask for?" God laughed and said, "That's easy! Ask to be content with whatever you get!" Now we have a true story, it is the story of the ocean liner Queen Mary I. She was built in Scotland in 1934.

On May 27, 1937, she made her maiden voyage leaving from Southampton, England and in a record five days, she reached New York. In her glory days, the Queen Mary could carry almost 2000 passengers who were pampered by a crew of over 1000. She was THE premier luxury liner of the time. Then something happened that changed all of that. World War II broke out and the Queen Mary made a transformation. She became known as "the Grey Ghost" when she was painted in camouflage and her portholes blackened. She became a military transport because she could outrun the German U-Boats. When she could no longer be a luxury liner, when she could no longer be a transport, now the Queen Mary is docked at Long Beach California, enjoying life as an exclusive floating restaurant and top tourist attraction. She creatively, once again, was of use. The story of the Queen Mary is the story of you and I – all of us – no exceptions. As with the Queen Mary, as time goes by, the unexpected occurs. We have to make the necessary adaptations. The Queen Mary ran into World War II, we run into our own personal "wars:" Sickness, accidents, disappointments, divorce, death of dear ones, change of school, change of career, financial setbacks, retirement, diminished mobility, diminished independence, all the challenges that aging

brings, and so so much more. Like the Queen Mary we have to creatively adapt to all the changes that life brings. The story of the Queen Mary asks us to ask ourselves. In the midst of all the circumstances and challenges of life, how can I adapt, grow and still serve. How can I live and love NOW not THEN. What is God asking of me NOW and not THEN? The Queen Mary never dreamt of anything except being a playground for the rich and famous. She was able to respond to change. You and I have to be able to respond to change in the many chapters of our lives. Because in life you can always expect the unexpected. Just ask the Queen Mary!