



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 – Fourth Sunday of Easter – May 07, 2017

What group of workers in America do you think is the happiest? In conjunction with that, what group of workers in America has the highest job satisfaction? What do you think?

Who are the happiest workers in America and who, of American workers, has the highest job satisfaction? Doctors? Lawyers? Nurses? Teachers? Accountants? Architects? Engineers?

None of the above! The group of workers in America who are the happiest and who have the highest job satisfaction are American Catholic priests. It's true, a recent survey shows that 90% of us are either happy or very happy. That's an astounding statistic! And the same survey shows that 89% of us believe that our work makes a difference in the world. Another astounding statistic! Catholic priests are the happiest and most satisfied workers in America.

Now, why am I telling you about this? Because today is Vocation Sunday; today when we

are encouraged to pray for priests and to pray for vocations to the priesthood. So, today we will focus in on priesthood. What I am going to do, is I am going to tell you a little bit about THIS priest with the hope that by sharing a little bit of my life, it will enrich your life. Two questions that I, and I think many priests are asked, are: "Why did you become a priest and what does a priest DO all day?" We'll take the first one first: "Why did you become a priest?" Well, of course, anyone who becomes a priest has a vocation – hears a calling to the priesthood. That's a given! One of the main reason why I became a priest, in fact it might be THE main reason why I became a priest, is because I wanted to reveal to people a God that they didn't have to be afraid of. You can't have a close, healthy relationship with a God that you're afraid of. Back in the day, I was the chaplain at a Catholic High School. In the yearbook, this is what they wrote about me: "Fr. Murphy taught us to love God and to love others, although not necessarily in that order. Fr. Murphy made God fun!" Well, if I succeeded in revealing a God who is attractive and approachable, well then good for me! You can't have God as always somber and serious. If God is always somber and serious, it is going to be hard not to be afraid of God. Jesus tells us: "I am gentle and humble of heart." Jesus tells us, "I call you my friends." The second commonly asked question: "What does a priest do all day?" After Mass, then what? What a priest does all day is try to be Jesus all day; wherever he is with whomever he is, he tries to be Jesus, that's what a priest does all day. At Mass, at meetings, at weddings, at wakes, at the hospital, at the restaurant, at Publix Grocery, at church, with the young, with the old, with affluent, with the struggling, with

those who are sweet and supportive, with those who are crabby and cranky, the priest tries to be Jesus. The priest goes around trying to do good and trying to be good all day, that's what a priest does. So, those two commonly asked questions I think I can answer. But there's another commonly asked question that I can't answer – I don't have a clue as to the answer. The question is this: "Why aren't more entering the priesthood?" I can't figure that out. It's true, priests don't make much money, but we have all that we need and then some. It's true, priests are celibate but we're not isolated. We don't marry, but we're not alone. As a group, for the most part, I think priests are upbeat, positive, helpful, kind. We laugh a lot, we smile often and easily – we're a happy group. Our seminaries should be bursting and I have no idea why they're not. I'm going to conclude by sharing with you the best compliment I ever received as a priest. As some of you know I am a DIEHARD New York Mets baseball fan. Well, some years ago, on a Saturday morning, a teenage girl comes rushing into the rectory where I was and she says: "Guess what, my family has fabulous box seats to this afternoon Met's game and we have a ticket for you! C'mon, let's go!!" After I profusely thanked her and I explained that I couldn't go the ballpark because I have to spend today preparing my homily for Sunday Masses. She looked at me as if I was from outer space and she said: "Prepare your homily! Who are you trying to kid, you say the same thing every Sunday!" It's a true story! "The stories might change, although you've told a few of them before, the jokes might change, although they're getting kinda stale, but the message never changes – the message is always: God loves us. That's the message you gave

last Sunday, that's the message you're gonna give this Sunday – you're gonna tell us that God loves us! So c'mon let's go to the ballpark!" Wow, what a compliment that was! If I say every Sunday, "God loves us," I've said it all!