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24th Ordinary Sunday - 12 September 2021

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12 September 2021

Twenty-Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Reflection by Anthony Doran

Introduction

It is no accident that the followers of Jesus use the sign of the Cross to identify ourselves. It is a reminder that, to be a disciple, we must lose our lives in order to save them: there is no other way to be a Christian. Our Mass today invites us to contemplate this challenge.

Penitential Act

Use one of the *Roman Missal* texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus, you call us to be your disciples. Lord, have mercy.
You teach us to carry our cross. Christ, have mercy.
You are the Anointed One of God. Lord, have mercy.

First Reading

Isaiah 50:5-9

Taken from the third of the Songs of the Suffering Servant, in today's reading, the servant declares his confidence in divine help, even in the face of great opposition.

Second Reading

James 2:14-18

Following last week's exhortation to be doers of the word and not just hearers, this Sunday, James reminds us that our faith in Christ must be expressed in good works.

Gospel Reading

Mark 8:27-35

Today's gospel reading contains both Peter's profession of faith in Jesus and Jesus' first prediction of his own passion and resurrection. Jesus also proclaims the mystery of losing one's life in order to save it.

Reflection

All of us like to be well thought of. So, people try to carve out for themselves a favourable image in the eyes of others. And some will do anything to maintain that image.

In today's Gospel, we see how little attention Jesus paid to what other people thought of him, even though that image was a favourable one. The people regarded him as a great prophet. Peter went even further. Peter declared Jesus to be the "Christ."

It would be impossible for us to exaggerate what the Messiah meant to the Jews. Many thought he would be a great military leader – another King David who would restore Israel to its former military greatness. This is perhaps what Peter thought.

Still others thought of the Messiah as a great priestly leader – who would lead the people back to true worship and true observance of the covenant.

Whatever Jesus thought, this was not the Messiah that he was to be. He told the apostles that the Son of Man would suffer as Isaiah had foretold in today's first reading. Jesus would not deceive them. Jesus would not let them have false hopes which would be disappointed later. The Messiah who Jesus is to be, is a suffering messiah.

Peter was not too thrilled with this idea of a suffering messiah. He seemed determined to save Jesus from such a fate. It is hard not to feel some sympathy for Peter. We always want to save those we love from suffering. But much as we might love someone, we can never stop them from being the person they are called to be.

And so, Jesus reprimands Peter. Whatever Jesus may or may not have wanted to do, he was never going to be the sort of messiah the people had in mind. What people thought or wanted was of little consequence. He was faithful to the God's call in his life.

Whatever our path in life, what really matters is that we be the people whom God calls us to be. And however and wherever and whoever God calls us to be, for all of us, the fundamental reality is that we take must carry our cross. For it is only then, that we are able to glory in the resurrection.

Prayer of the Faithful

Introduction

God is our rock and our stronghold, so let us pour out our hearts before him and bring forward the needs of our world and our local community.

Petitions

We pray for Pope Francis and all our Church leaders. May they be guided through this time of the Plenary Council so that our Church will be strengthened and renewed.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the leaders of our nation. May they be granted the wisdom and foresight to govern with compassion and justice so that the distribution of medical needs during this pandemic will be equitable and able to heal our world.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those who volunteer their time in the service of God's people. May they always be a sign of God's mercy and hope to all.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those who work tirelessly in hospitals and medical centres around the world caring for people suffering from COVID-19. May they receive grace, peace, strength and protection from illness.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those who deny God in their thought and actions. May they experience the saving power of our loving and merciful God.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for all fathers on this Fathers' Day. May they be gifted with the special qualities that were present in St Joseph in this year dedicated to his sainthood.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those who are grieving and separated from their loved ones during death because of the pandemic. May they feel the mercy of God through the love of those around them.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

Conclusion

Father, you come to the help of your servants in their need; hear the prayers we make in faith, through the power of the Spirit and in the name of Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Music selections by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

GA

Keep in mind. L. Deiss. 391
Let all mortal flesh keep silence. G. Moultrie. 190
Shelter me, O God. B. Hurd. 230
The servant song. R. Gillard. 487
The summons. J. Bell. 502
Tree of life. M. Haugen. 307
Unless a grain of wheat. B. Farrell. 500
When I survey the wondrous cross. I. Watts. 330

AOV1

For you are my God. J. Foley SJ. 178
Keep in mind. L. Deiss. 180
Shelter me, O God. B. Hurd. 140
Unless a grain of wheat. B. Farrell. 35

AOV2

The servant song. R. Gillard. 169

AOV4Kids

To live like Jesus. M. O'Brien/ D. Pudney. 160.
What a friend we have in Jesus. G. Holmes. 117

AOVNG

Come and follow me. Tom Franzak. 25
Will you come and follow me/The summons. Graham Maule and John L. Bell. 149

CWB

Firmly I believe and truly. John Henry Newman. 677

CWBII

Sunday by Sunday hymn suggestions
Firmly I believe and truly. John Henry Newman. 486
Take up your cross. Charles William Everest. 612
The summons. John L. Bell and Graham Maule. 645

S&S1

The summons. John L. Bell. 137

Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy

Psalm 114: *I will walk in the presence of the Lord, in the land of the living. Alleluia!*
Psalm 114: Noel Ansell. CWB 419
Psalm 115 (114): Jenny O'Brien. JOBB pg. 90
I will walk before the Lord. Tony Alsonso. LPB pg. 154