

The Twenty-Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time
September 16, 2018

Reading 1: Isaiah 50: 5-9a

The Lord GOD opens my ear that I may hear;
and I have not rebelled,
have not turned back.

I gave my back to those who beat me,
my cheeks to those who plucked my beard;
my face I did not shield
from buffets and spitting.

The Lord GOD is my help,
therefore I am not disgraced;
I have set my face like flint,
knowing that I shall not be put to shame.

He is near who upholds my right;
if anyone wishes to oppose me,
let us appear together.

Who disputes my right?

Let that man confront me.

See, the Lord GOD is my help;
who will prove me wrong?

Reading 2: James 2: 14-18

What good is it, my brothers and sisters,
if someone says he has faith but does not have works?
Can that faith save him?

If a brother or sister has nothing to wear
and has no food for the day,
and one of you says to them,

"Go in peace, keep warm, and eat well,"
but you do not give them the necessities of the body,
what good is it?

So also faith of itself,
if it does not have works, is dead.

Indeed someone might say,

"You have faith and I have works."

Demonstrate your faith to me without works,
and I will demonstrate my faith to you from my works.

Responsorial: Psalm 116

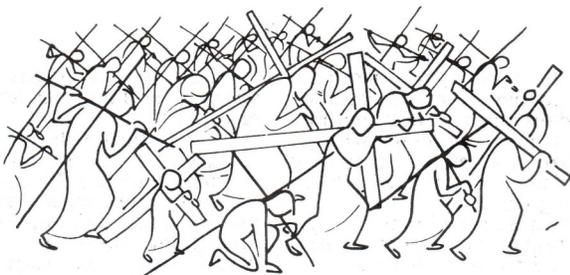
I will walk before the Lord, in the land of the living.

I love the LORD because he has heard
my voice in supplication,
because he has inclined his ear to me
the day I called.

The cords of death encompassed me;
the snares of the netherworld seized upon me;
I fell into distress and sorrow,
and I called upon the name of the LORD,
"O LORD, save my life!"

Gracious is the LORD and just;
yes, our God is merciful.
The LORD keeps the little ones;
I was brought low, and he saved me.

For he has freed my soul from death,
my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling.
I shall walk before the Lord
in the land of the living.



Gospel: Mark 8: 27-35

Jesus and his disciples set out
for the villages of Caesarea Philippi.
Along the way he asked his disciples,
"Who do people say that I am?"

They said in reply,
"John the Baptist, others Elijah,
still others one of the prophets."

And he asked them,
"But who do you say that I am?"

Peter said to him in reply,
"You are the Christ."

Then he warned them not to tell anyone about him.

He began to teach them
that the Son of Man must suffer greatly
and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests,
and the scribes,
and be killed, and rise after three days.

He spoke this openly.

Then Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him.
At this he turned around and, looking at his disciples,
rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan.
You are thinking not as God does,
but as human beings do."

He summoned the crowd with his disciples
and said to them,
"Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself,
take up his cross, and follow me.
For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it,
but whoever loses his life for my sake
and that of the gospel will save it."

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I Will Choose Christ

*I will choose Christ, I will choose love, I choose to serve
I give my heart, I give my life, I give my all to you*

How many times must he call my name
and show to me that he is God
And as a servant he calls to me
“You must serve too”

Christ, my teacher and healer,
teach my heart and heal my soul
And as I walk this road with you
teach me to love

As I look upon your cross
so too must I die with you
And with the death of my own desires
I'll rise with you
Tom Booth ©1991 Published by Spirit and Song

Psalms 116

*I will walk in the presence of God,
in the land of the living;
I will walk in the presence of God.*

The Summons

Will you come and follow me, if I but call your name
Will you go where you don't know, and never be the same
Will you let my love be shown,
Will you let my name be known
Will you let my life be grown,
In you and you in me

Will you love the 'you' you hide, if I but call your name
Will you quell the fear inside, and never be the same
Will you use the faith you've found,
to reshape the world around
Through my sight and touch and sound,
In you and you in me

Lord, your summons echoes true,
when you but call my name
Let me turn and follow you, and never be the same
In your company I'll go,
where your love and footsteps show
Thus I'll move and live and grow, In you and you in me
John L. Bell ©1987

A Christian Hurricane Prayer

God of the Universe, at the dawn of creation, your Spirit breathed on the waters, making them the wellspring of all holiness. You created the oceans and rivers, and all that dwell within them, and at your word the wind and the waves were born. The seasons follow your plan, and the tides rise and fall on your command. In both calm and storm, you are with us. On the Sea of Galilee, even when the disciples began to fear, Jesus showed that he was Lord over the waters by rebuking the storms, so that all would know that even the wind and the waves obey him. Creator God, we ask you to calm the wind and the waves of the approaching hurricane, and spare those in its path from harm. Help those who are in its way to reach safety. Open our hearts in generosity to all who need help in the coming days. In all things and in all times, help us to remember that even when life seems dark and stormy, you are in the boat with us, guiding us to safety. Amen.

-Rev. James Martin, S.J., Published originally at *America Magazine*

Petitions

Our response: “Lord, you are the Christ.”

Closing Prayer

Make us one, O God, in acknowledging Jesus the Christ. As we proclaim him by our words, let us follow him in our works; give us strength to take up the cross and courage to lose our lives for his sake. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen.

Questions for Reflection

1. What word or phrase resonated with you in the Gospel?
2. Think about your life and try to remember a time when you picked up the cross. What was the cross? How did you carry it? Did you feel Jesus' presence?
3. What does it mean when Jesus says we must lose our lives to save them? Who do you know that is an example of this?
4. Imagine that Jesus asks you, “Who do you say that I am?” What is your answer?
5. Has “knowing” Jesus ever posed a serious challenge to you? What was it?
6. In the First Reading, Isaiah says, “The Lord God opens my ear that I may hear ...” What kinds of things do you think God would like us to hear? What are we deaf to?
7. “The Lord God is my help ...” These words are found twice in the First Reading. How do they relate to Jesus' utterance in the Gospel, “Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself.” Will God be with us every minute, no matter what?
8. Have you ever been persecuted unjustly, like the psalmist? What emotions, fears, and anxieties were involved? What promises does the Lord give us in our suffering?
9. In the Second Reading, we hear that we should serve our neighbor. How do you respond to this call? With a few words? In some of your actions? With your entire life? How important is it to express your faith in works?