

25th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME - SEPTEMBER 23, 2018

SUNDAY'S READINGS - EXCERPTS TO PLACE IN YOUR COMMUNICATIONS

First Reading:

For if the just one be the son of God, God will defend him  
and deliver him from the hand of his foes. (Wis 2:18)

Psalm:

The Lord upholds my life. (Ps 54)

Second Reading:

And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace  
for those who cultivate peace. (Jas 3:18)

Gospel:

"Whoever receives one child such as this in my name, receives me;  
and whoever receives me,  
receives not me but the One who sent me." (Mk 9:37)

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WEEKLY READINGS AND OBSERVANCES - ENGAGE PARISHIONERS IN DAILY MASS AND PRAYER

Readings for the Week of September 23, 2018

Sunday: Wis 2:12, 17-20/Ps 54:3-4, 5, 6-8 [6b]/Jas 3:16--4:3/Mk 9:30-37

Monday: Prv 3:27-34/Ps 15:2-3a, 3bc-4ab, 5 [1]/Lk 8:16-18

Tuesday: Prv 21:1-6, 10-13/Ps 119:1, 27, 30, 34, 35, 44 [35]/Lk 8:19-21

Wednesday: Prv 30:5-9/Ps 119:29, 72, 89, 101, 104, 163 [105]/Lk 9:1-6

Thursday: Eccl 1:2-11/Ps 90:3-4, 5-6, 12-13, 14 and 17bc [1]/Lk 9:7-9

Friday: Eccl 3:1-11/Ps 144:1b and 2abc, 3-4 [1]/Lk 9:18-22

Saturday: Dn 7:9-10, 13-14 or Rv 12:7-12a/Ps 138:1-2ab, 2cde-3, 4-5 [1]/Jn 1:47-51

Next Sunday: Nm 11:25-29/Ps 19:8, 10, 12-13, 14 [9a]/Jas 5:1-6/Mk 9:38-43, 45, 47-48

Observances for the Week of September 23, 2018

Sunday: 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Monday: - - -

Tuesday: - - -

Wednesday: Sts. Cosmas and Damian, Martyrs

Thursday: St. Vincent de Paul, Priest

Friday: St. Wenceslaus, Martyr; St. Lawrence Ruiz and Companions, Martyrs

Saturday: Sts. Michael, Gabriel and Raphael, Archangels

Next Sunday: 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time

GOSPEL MEDITATION - ENCOURAGE DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF SCRIPTURE

September 23, 2018 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time

The Oscars. The Super Bowl. TV talent shows. Your son's Little League championship. We live in a culture set on competition. The desire to "be the best" goes beyond hobbies and into politics, the corporate world, and parenting comparisons at the park. This desire is as old as the human race, and it surely arose in Jesus' day. While Biblical society was significantly less open and upwardly mobile than our own, power was attractive. From what we know, many of Jesus' disciples had come from lowly backgrounds. Now they followed an increasingly popular rabbi who seemed primed to do something big.

Jesus does his best to dissuade their high hopes by prophesying his own defeat. "The Son of Man is to be handed over ? and they will kill him." Internalizing the message proves challenging for the disciples, and their attention remains fixed on earthly glory.

"They ? [discuss] among themselves on the way who was the greatest." True to style, Jesus flips their pretensions on their heads.

"If anyone wishes to be first, he shall be the last of all and the servant of all."

We have heard these Biblical principles before. Do we believe them? In our professional lives, do we do whatever we can to get ahead, or are we concerned with the entire team succeeding? In the lives of our children, are we more concerned with victory or with building character? Jesus doesn't condemn success, but he reframes it. "Whoever receives one child such as this in my name, receives me." Today's Gospel is a reality check. In God's eyes, our success will not be measured by worldly output alone but by how much love and service we offer to others in the process.

## LIVE THE LITURGY - INSPIRATION FOR THE WEEK

Humility is really a virtue that allows us to keep our relationships in proper order: God first, others second, and myself third. However, we all wrestle with our incompleteness, weakness, and imperfections. Passions and impulses from within can color how we view our lives and distort them. Who among us does not struggle with jealousy, envy, pride, and lust? Then, when we can't have what we desire, we find ourselves angry, greedy, and taking more than we deserve. The downward spiral continues. Even Jesus' disciples, who knew him better than most, argued about who was the greatest. Humbly seeking the wisdom that comes from God and His righteousness is the corrective we need in order to keep ourselves in check.

## EVERYDAY STEWARDSHIP - RECOGNIZE GOD IN YOUR ORDINARY MOMENTS

If you have traveled on Southwest Airlines, you are aware of how they line people up prior to boarding. You receive a lettered group of A, B, or C and a number. You line up with your group and in sequence based on your numbers. This means that before every flight, you'll hear people ask over and over, "What number are you?" Some don't ask and simply place themselves in the line. I have been A-1 before and had someone stand in line in front of me. There is nothing before A-1 in the line! It is crazy the urgency of some to board the plane and get the perfect seat. For some, I think it has more to do with a sense of entitlement. No one is going to cheat me out of my place in line! I deserve it!

Of course, you can't deserve your place in the line more than another. We are all getting on the plane and going to the same place. In life, some of us act like people in a Southwest boarding line. We want our place in line, and we will sometimes put ourselves ahead of others without merit. Good stewardship allows us to see our actions in this regard as folly. Jesus said, "If anyone wishes to be first, he shall be the last of all and the servant of all." We are called to serve and not to be served. If we seek what we truly deserve in this life, we will find that we are not actually entitled to much. If we humble ourselves and seek to serve others, we will receive an abundance of good things, even though we still won't deserve it. For all we receive, whether we are A-1 or C-30, is a gift.

--Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS

## QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK - INVITE PARISHIONERS TO REFLECT AND RESPOND TO SCRIPTURE

### First Reading

We hear from the Wisdom writer the mindset of those who oppose God. Where do you see this mentality in the world today?

### Second Reading

James speaks of one's passions as the source of much conflict in the world and in ourselves. Which of your passions have caused conflict for you?

### Gospel Reading

Jesus teaches the disciples today that true discipleship requires humility and simplicity. In what ways is this condition of discipleship a challenge for you?

## CATHOLIC QUOTES - WORDS TO INSPIRE THE FAITHFUL

Pray, hope, and don't worry!

-Padre Pio

## WHY DO WE DO THAT? - CATHOLIC LIFE EXPLAINED

### Question:

Our parish has been focusing on issues of peace and justice. What are the principles that guide decision making and social morality?

Answer: There are seven principals of Catholic social teaching that guide our sense of social morality. These seven key points are the hallmarks of a just society, moral laws, and good leadership. They help shape our social "conscience" and lead us to choose those things that characterize social justice. They are 1) respect for the life and dignity of the human person; 2) call to family, community, and participation; 3) rights and responsibilities; 4) a preferential option for the poor; 5) the dignity of work and the rights of workers; 6) solidarity; and 7) care for God's creation.

Catholic social teaching has had a great influence in our history and continues to guide us well. We must value every person in all walks of life, but especially those who are weak, vulnerable, and least able to defend themselves. We cannot justify the ends with the means, so no life can ever be sacrificed for the sake of another. The basic necessities of life cannot be denied someone: food, shelter, clothing, and medical care. We can and must find ways to put into practice the Gospel values we preach and proclaim, so that all people can know and experience God's love for them. That might be the greatest principle of all!