

# The Living Word

Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B

19 September 2021

## First Reading Wis 2:12, 17-20

Let us condemn him to a most shameful death.

The godless say to themselves,

'Let us lie in wait for the virtuous man,  
since he annoys us  
and opposes our way of life,  
reproaches us for our breaches of the  
law

and accuses us of playing false to  
our upbringing.

Let us see if what he says is true,  
let us observe what kind of end he  
himself will have.

If the virtuous man is God's son,  
God will take his part  
and rescue him from the clutches of  
his enemies.

Let us test him with cruelty and  
with torture,

and thus explore this gentleness of his  
and put his endurance to the proof.

Let us condemn him to a shameful death  
since he will be looked after – we have  
his word for it.'

## Responsorial Psalm

**Ps 53:3-6. 8. R. v.6**

*(R.) The Lord upholds my life.*

1. O God, save me by your name;  
by your power, uphold my cause.  
O God, hear my prayers;  
listen to the words of my mouth. *(R.)*
2. For proud men have risen against me,  
ruthless men seek my life.  
They have no regard for God. *(R.)*
3. But I have God for my help.  
The Lord upholds my life.  
I will sacrifice to you with willing heart  
and praise your name for it is good. *(R.)*

## Second Reading Jas 3:16-4:3

Justice is the harvest of peacemakers from seeds  
sown in a spirit of peace.

Wherever you find jealousy and ambition,  
you find disharmony, and wicked things of  
every kind being done; whereas the wisdom  
that comes down from above is essentially  
something pure; it also makes for peace,  
and is kindly and considerate; it is full of  
compassion and shows itself by doing  
good; nor is there any trace of partiality or  
hypocrisy in it. Peacemakers, when they

work for peace, sow the seeds which will bear  
fruit in holiness.

Where do these wars and battles between  
yourselves first start? Isn't it precisely in  
the desires fighting inside your own selves?  
You want something and you haven't got  
it; so you are prepared to kill. You have an  
ambition that you cannot satisfy; so you  
fight to get your way by force. Why you don't  
have what you want is because you don't  
pray for it; when you do pray and don't get it,  
it is because you have not prayed properly,  
you have prayed for something to indulge  
your own desires.

## Gospel Acclamation See 2 Thes 2:14

*Alleluia, alleluia!*

*God has called us with the gospel  
to share in the glory of our  
Lord Jesus Christ.*

*Alleluia!*

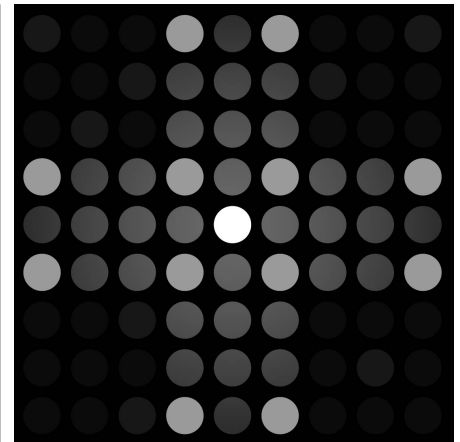
## Gospel Mk 9:30-37

*The Son of Man will be delivered into the hands of humanity  
... All who wish to be first must make themselves the servants  
of all.*

After leaving the mountain Jesus and his  
disciples made their way through Galilee;  
and he did not want anyone to know,  
because he was instructing his disciples;  
he was telling them, 'The Son of Man will be  
delivered into the hands of men; they will  
put him to death; and three days after he  
has been put to death he will rise again.'  
But they did not understand what he said  
and were afraid to ask him.

They came to Capernaum, and when he  
was in the house he asked them, 'What  
were you arguing about on the road?'  
They said nothing because they had been  
arguing which of them was the greatest. So  
he sat down, called the Twelve to him and  
said, 'If anyone wants to be first, he must  
make himself last of all and servant of all.'  
He then took a little child, set him in front of  
them, put his arms round him, and said to  
them, 'Anyone who welcomes one of these  
little children in my name, welcomes me;  
and anyone who welcomes me welcomes  
not me but the one who sent me.'

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## Reflection by Fr Michael Tate

Jesus was well aware of the  
constant temptation for the leaders  
amongst his followers to be  
conditioned by the surrounding  
social and political structures. So,  
when he became aware that his  
disciples were disputing 'who is the  
greatest', he decided to teach them  
a lesson by engaging in some  
counter-cultural street theatre.

Jesus saw a young boy on the edge  
of the crowd and beckoned him into  
the middle of his group of disciples.  
This was not because of some  
sentimental idea that all kids are  
little innocents, but because in his  
society, children were absolutely at  
the bottom of the social scale. Jesus  
moved an utter nobody from the  
margins of society to the centre,  
challenging his disciples to change  
their perspective.

This challenge is made to all of us.  
We must identify those on the  
margins, some of whom we have  
quite literally dis-located like  
indigenous communities or asylum  
seekers, and bring them into the  
centre of our concern. There may be  
pain, personal and social, in  
changing perspective.

We might pause for a moment to  
pray for a new way of seeing, for  
perseverance in re-locating  
someone in the centre of our  
concerns, for the graceful insight  
that in welcoming that person we  
have welcomed Christ.

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