

# The Living Word

Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B

26 September 2021

## First Reading Nm 11:25-29

*Are you jealous on my account? Who decrees that all people may prophesy?*

The Lord came down in the Cloud. He spoke with Moses, but took some of the spirit that was on him and put it on the seventy elders. When the spirit came on them they prophesied, but not again.

Two men had stayed back in the camp; one was called Eldad and the other Medad. The spirit came down on them; though they had not gone to the Tent, their names were enrolled among the rest. These began to prophesy in the camp. The young man ran to tell this to Moses, 'Look', he said, 'Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp.' Then said Joshua the son of Nun, who had served Moses from his youth, 'My Lord Moses, stop them!' Moses answered him, 'Are you jealous on my account? If only the whole people of the Lord were prophets, and the Lord gave his Spirit to them all!'

## Responsorial Psalm

**Ps 18:8. 10. 12-14. R. v.9**

**(R.) The precepts of the Lord give joy to the heart.**

1. The law of the Lord is perfect, it revives the soul.  
The rule of the Lord is to be trusted, it gives wisdom to the simple. (R.)
2. The fear of the Lord is holy, abiding for ever.  
The decrees of the Lord are truth and all of them just. (R.)
3. So in them your servant finds instructions;  
great reward is in their keeping.  
But who can detect all his errors?  
From hidden faults acquit me. (R.)
4. From presumption restrain your servant and let it not rule me.  
Then shall I be blameless,  
clean from grave sin. (R.)

## Second Reading Jas 5:1-6

*Your wealth is rotting.*

An answer for the rich. Start crying, weep for the miseries that are coming to you. Your wealth is all rotting, your clothes are all eaten up by moths. All your gold and your silver are corroding away, and the same corrosion will be your own sentence, and eat into your body. It was a burning fire that you stored up as your treasure

for the last days. Labourers mowed your fields, and you cheated them – listen to the wages that you kept back, calling out; realise that the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts. On earth you have had a life of comfort and luxury; in the time of slaughter you went on eating to your heart's content. It was you who condemned the innocent and killed them; they offered you no resistance.

## Gospel Acclamation See Jn 17:17

**Alleluia, alleluia!**

**Your word, O Lord, is truth:  
make us holy in the truth.**

**Alleluia!**

## Gospel Mk 9:38-43, 45, 47-48

*Anyone who is not against us is for us. If your hand should cause you to sin, cut it off.*

John said to Jesus, 'Master, we saw a man who is not one of us casting out devils in your name; and because he was not one of us we tried to stop him.' But Jesus said, 'You must not stop him: no one who works a miracle in my name is likely to speak evil of me. Anyone who is not against us is for us.'

'If anyone gives you a cup of water to drink just because you belong to Christ, then I tell you solemnly, he will most certainly not lose his reward.'

'But anyone who is an obstacle to bring down one of these little ones who have faith, would be better thrown into the sea with a great millstone round his neck. And if your hand should cause you to sin, cut it off; it is better for you to enter into life crippled, than to have two hands and go to hell, into the fire that cannot be put out. And if your foot should cause you to sin, cut it off; it is better for you to enter into life lame, than to have two feet and be thrown into hell. And if your eye should cause you to sin, tear it out; it is better for you to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell where their worm does not die nor their fire go out.'



## Reflection by Fr Michael Tate

An easy way to deal with this Gospel: 'anyone who is not against us is for us,' would be to emphasise the transformation of the relationship of Catholics with Protestants. Too easy.

But what about our relationship with the Muslims? There is a huge gulf between Muslims and us about Jesus Christ. Muslims do not even believe that he was killed on the cross, let alone raised to life. We hold to the testimony and the faith of the Apostles.

But Catholics also believe that the Divine Wind blows where it pleases amongst all people of all religious traditions (and of none). In the early Church this was expressed by saying that the Seeds of the Word were sown by the Holy Spirit in the hearts of all human beings.

We need to recognise the Seed of the Word in Islam – our shared belief in the one God, Creator of the cosmos, Lord of history, merciful and just. The task of the Church is to bring that Seed closer to the illumination of Divine Light so that it may eventually grow in belief that God is indeed One in the loving relationship of Triune life.

The world is holding its breath over the encounter of the Catholic Church and Islam. There is a history of mutual violence and contemporary barbarities which are inhumane and blasphemous. But, in the face of indifference and hostility to religion, at least in the West, it is good to acknowledge what we share in common.

We may take a moment to pray for the grace to relate to those Muslims whom we know in our own society in light of our faith that the Divine Wind has sown and is nurturing the Seed of the Word amongst them.

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