

Twenty-ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time

A man was running late for an important meeting and was struggling to find a parking spot. In desperation, he looked up to Heaven and said, "Lord, if you find me a parking space, I promise to go to church every Sunday, volunteer at the soup kitchen, and be a better person." Suddenly, a car pulled out of a perfect spot right in front of him. The man looked up and said, "Never mind, Lord, I found one myself!"

Dear Friends,

This weekend we remember World Mission Sunday. This Sunday's readings help us to reflect on service to other people who are in need.

Some people like to be in charge, whether it is at home, church, or workplaces. Every organization, school, team has one. Even the little league parents talk about it. It is the inner circle. To be honest, most of the people desire to be part of the inner circle. I can tell that from my family or from the church. But most of the time those people forget about responsibilities and expectations.

Today's Gospel brings a typical example of trying to be in the inner circle and what that brings to the table. Jesus had disciples and named them apostles and he took some of them to the important things (Transfiguration Mt17:1-13). Peter was given the chair. So naturally next in line expected the next position. James and John posed the question.

There is a two line saying, "When a mother hears her son heralded as a good and learned man, her joy exceeds that of his joyous birth." Every parent wants their children to accomplish something great.

Jesus gives a different model to those disciples and to us as well. Power means service. Authority is not about being served by others. It is about being of service to others. Jesus clarifies deeper the meaning of discipleship. Jesus flips the worldly understanding of leadership, explaining that in God's kingdom, greatness is measured by one's ability to serve others.

Both the first reading from Isaiah, and the Gospel, emphasize that suffering has a redemptive purpose. Jesus' suffering is not only a sign of His solidarity with humanity but also the means through which He brings about salvation. This teaches us that the Christian journey often involves bearing our crosses, but through suffering, grace and redemption come.

Humility and Service: The Gospel strongly challenges the worldly pursuit of power and status. Jesus teaches that true discipleship requires humility and selfless service. Just as

He did not come to be served, but to serve, Christians are called to imitate Him by serving others, especially those in need. This counters our human desire for recognition and places emphasis on a life of humble service.

Let us reflect about how could we serve other people in small ways? When we serve one another, a relationship is built. Serving others, particularly the vulnerable and marginalized, is central to Christian living. Whether through acts of kindness, charitable work, or simply being there for those in need, we imitate Christ's example.