

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON (or a hymn) I am the salvation of the people, says the Lord. Should they cry to me in any distress, I will hear them, and I will be their Lord for ever.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Ps 53)

ANTIPHON: The Lord upholds my life.

RESPONSE: The Lord upholds my life.

LECTOR: 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.**

LECTOR: For proud men have risen against me, ruthless men seek my life. They have no regard for God. **R.**

LECTOR: 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.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Alleluia, alleluia! God has called us with the gospel to share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Alleluia!

COMMUNION ANTIPHON (or a hymn) You have laid down your precepts to be carefully kept; may my ways be firm in keeping your statutes.

Or

I am the Good Shepherd, says the Lord; I know my sheep, and mine know me.

TODAY'S READINGS Wisdom 2:12, 17-20; James 3:16 - 4:3; Mark 9:30-37

NEXT WEEK (26th Sunday of Year B) Numbers 11:25-29; Psalm 18; James 5:1-6; Mark 9:38-43, 45, 47-48

*Yuletide cheer
with Majellan
Christmas
cards*

Christmas cards

The Majellan Christmas cards are a perfect way to send a joyful message of love to those you care about. Our cards convey the true meaning of Christmas and are beautifully designed. The price per set is \$8.00 for up to 9 sets and includes postage. Details at: <https://majellan.media/product/christmas-cards-2024/>



majellan

*Being great in
God's eyes*



22 September 2024 25th Sunday Year B

This week's reading from the Book of Wisdom illustrates the kind of thinking that was common in the ancient world: If God is with someone then, assured of God's protection, they will prosper. If, on the other hand, they are suffering and not prospering, then it must be that God is not on their side.

How, then, would the ancient world have understood the teaching of Jesus in the gospel? "The Son of Man will be delivered into the hands of men; they will put him to death." If his enemies were to kill him, let alone if he was to be publicly humiliated and suffer, surely he could not be the messiah for whom the people waited.

This is the second time in the Gospel of Mark that Jesus has prophesied his death. At this point, the disciples don't understand and are too confused and afraid to ask Jesus what he really means.

When instead the disciples talk about who among them is the greatest, they still dream of becoming earthly lords and princes of status, power and authority. But before we judge the disciples too harshly, we must remember that this story from Mark's gospel has been recorded to mirror our own sins and temptations. We too have ambitions and desires that impede our ability to respond to what Jesus wants from us.

Jesus is charting a very unusual and very new path to what it means to be great in the eyes of God, one that cuts against the culture of his day. In his eyes, serving God means loving and

servicing the lowliest and those most in need.

When Jesus instructs his disciples to welcome children, he is taking the side of the most neglected, least powerful, and least respected members of society.

For Jesus, greatness is not in career achievement, status, power, attention or appreciation in the world. Instead, Jesus calls us to set aside our desires and ambitions to get ahead. As Jesus says elsewhere in the gospels, it is those who are willing to lose their lives who will find life. It is those who put their own egos last and lowest who will be first and greatest in the eyes of God.

St James reflects on this mystery in the second reading. He describes the disciples' self-interest and ambition as told in today's gospel as destined to result in "disharmony, and wicked things of every kind being done".

But look at the benefits that come from discarding this self-centred way of living and thinking. James describes the wisdom that Jesus brings as bringing "peace". It makes us "kindly and considerate", "full of compassion", and "shows itself by doing good".

There in that way of living is true freedom and true greatness.

Joseph Doyle
© Majellan Media 2024