

25th Sunday of the Year B

*I am the Saviour of all people, says the Lord.
Whatever their troubles, I will answer their cry,
and I will always be their Lord. (Entrance Antiphon)*



First Reading

Wisdom 2:12.17-20

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."

Second Reading

James 3:16 – 4:3

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.

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."

Meditation

Jesus, the Son of Man, is on the road which leads to his passion. Although his message jars the disciples' expectations, he nevertheless strives to draw them after him. Unwittingly, and often unwillingly, they are to become messengers of a suffering Messiah.

"What were you discussing on the way home?" Jesus must have observed their lack of perception. They are arguing about who will be the greatest in that temporal kingdom which they anticipate. Accustomed to humiliation they dream of advancement to positions of prestige and power. "You want to be the first?" says Jesus, "Become the last! You want to be great? Become small! You want to be masters? Become servants!" This paradox is based not on theoretical considerations but on the concrete example which the suffering servant himself never ceases to give.

And what do we discuss on the way home? Perhaps we too would be embarrassed if Jesus were to question us. In speaking about what is closest to our hearts, we reveal the depths of ourselves. You dream of authority, of power? Ask yourself how you will best serve others, how you will best help those in need. So must it be with every Christian eager to conform with Jesus.