

# Cycle B – 29th Sunday in Ordinary Time – Oct. 20, 2024

## World Mission Sunday

*(All Three Readings)*

### Opening Prayer (Psalm 33)

Leader: The word of the Lord is upright,  
and all His work is done in faithfulness.

All: The Lord loves righteousness and justice;  
the earth is full of the steadfast love of the Lord.

Leader: Our soul waits for the Lord;  
He is our help and shield.

All: Let Your steadfast love be upon us, O Lord,  
as we place all our hope in You.

### First Reading – Isaiah 53: 10-11

This passage comes near the end of the fourth and last song of the suffering servant in Deutero-Isaiah (or Second Isaiah). These sufferings eventually lead to the suffering servant's death, while those looking on realize that he was innocent. Yet, "God was pleased" not to justify suffering and death, but in view of the outcome, that is: because of the redemptive power released in the death of the innocent servant.

1. What part of this reading is hard to accept?
2. Have you ever felt the victim of "innocent suffering"?
3. How do we help those in pain understand these words?

### Second Reading – Hebrews 4: 14-16

The Letter to the Hebrews uses Jewish liturgical images to convey the centrality of Christ's priesthood. This is the only place in the entire New Testament that Jesus is referred to as the great high priest. The once-for-all sacrifice of Jesus is regarded as the expression and fulfillment of the Jewish high priest's duty to enter the inner sanctuary of the Temple once a year. The effectiveness of Jesus' priestly self-offering makes any further offering redundant and unnecessary. As one who came "in the flesh," completely one with humanity, Christ Jesus understands both the weaknesses and the needs of human beings. Through Christ's sacrifice, every believer may now approach God's sanctuary.

1. What speaks to you most in this passage?
2. How does this divine assurance in Christ' redemptive death affect your faith?
3. Who in your own circle of family, friends & colleagues would have the most trouble understanding this passage?

## **Gospel – Mark 10: 35-45**

It seems that “power struggles” were part and parcel of the Christian community from the very beginning. The request from the sons of Zebedee, as recorded in Mark’s Gospel, is completely inconsistent with the discipleship Jesus invites them to embrace. Jesus responds to them with three distinct pronouncements: 1) they will surely suffer, 2) allotting places in God’s reign is not Jesus’ job, and 3) leadership ought to be exercised completely contrary to the worldly ways, i.e. in surrender to mutual service.

1. What part of this passage do you identify with the most?
2. Have you ever been involved in power struggles? How was this resolved?
3. Can you identify with the disciples who are not “getting it?” Give an example.
4. Why does Jesus’ definition of leadership continue to be a hard call, including in today’s church?

## **Praying the Word**

*Intention:* For all called to leadership in the church, both ordained and lay, as they strive to grow in Jesus’ vision of uncompromised service to God’s people. We pray to the Lord.

*(Invite personal intentions, ending with the Lord’s Prayer)*

## **Concluding Prayer**

**Leader:** Jesus, servant of God and humanity,  
teach us the spirit of true servanthood in all our ways.

**All:** We confess pride, jealousy and competition  
all of which obstruct our growth in holiness.

**Leader:** Grant that we may always conform our will to yours,  
and serve your people with humility and sincerity of heart.

**All:** Teach us to become great in your eyes  
by becoming small and unassuming in the eyes of the world.  
We make this prayer through Christ, our Lord.  
AMEN

(Let Us Share a Sign of Peace)