

Homily. 29th Sunday in Ordinary Time. Year. B. 16/17 October 2021.

Like I said to you last weekend, we've been listening to At. Mark's gospel for some weeks now as Jesus attempted to teach His disciples about the values and way of the Kingdom of God. We've heard Him speak about giving away His own life in selfless service for the salvation of many, about fidelity to our word, commitments and relationships, of welcoming the little ones and having their childlike trust in God's goodness, of putting wealth into its proper place so that God's will and way always stays at the centre of our minds and hearts. In short, Jesus teaching calls us to change from 'me 'to 'we 'thinking, to convert from what good for you and for yourself to what's best for us and for the community.

This weekend Jesus has yet another go, sadly getting the same results. He calls His disciples to move away from living for power, status and personal glory, choosing instead His way of service to the truth and to what liberates and benefits of others. The disciples just don't, or maybe they just won't get what Jesus is trying to teach them, because He's asking for a big shift in their thinking, a conversion of their values, attitudes and life-direction. As Mark's gospel attests, there's no doubting that this shift in values was hard for the Jesus disciples to understand.

Let's be honest here though, Jesus message is just as challenging and difficult for us who are the Lord's disciples today, to receive and put into practice. With this being true, I hope that all of us can take some comfort from our 2nd reading. In the section of the Letter to the Hebrews we heard that Jesus, Son of God and our supreme high priest, feels empathy with us and our situation because He was tempted and tested in every

way that we are, though He remained without sin. Accepting His offer of friendship means that we can be confident that we will have mercy, gracious kindness and understanding from Our Lord when we ask for help. Our confusion and struggles with, and our resistance to the Lord's teaching and way of life, don't have to end in frustration and sadness for us. Instead, these difficulties can move us now into deeper prayer and trust in the gift of His power to forgive, renew and save us from ourselves and the worst within us, a real experience of the Lord's personal salvation working in our lives.

So, my sisters and brothers in Christ, let's take heart! Let's make the response of this Mass our own theme and prayer for the week that lies ahead; Let your mercy be on us O Lord, as we place our trust in you. Let's aim to make this short line part of our prayer throughout each day, come what may, knowing by the light of faith that Jesus is forever on our side, teaching, guiding and leading us ever closer to having a mind like His and heart formed in the image of the Eucharist we're celebrating.