

Mark 8:27-35

Jesus and his disciples left for the villages round Caesarea Philippi. On the way he put this question to his disciples, 'Who do people say I am?' And they told him. 'John the Baptist,' they said 'others Elijah; others again, one of the prophets.' 'But you,' he asked 'who do you say I am?' Peter spoke up and said to him, 'You are the Christ.' And he gave them strict orders not to tell anyone about him.

And he began to teach them that the Son of Man was destined to suffer grievously, to be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and to be put to death, and after three days to rise again; and he said all this quite openly. Then, taking him aside, Peter started to remonstrate with him. But, turning and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said to him, 'Get behind me, Satan! Because the way you think is not God's way but man's.'

He called the people and his disciples to him and said, 'If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross and follow me. For anyone who wants to save his life will lose it; but anyone who loses his life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it.'

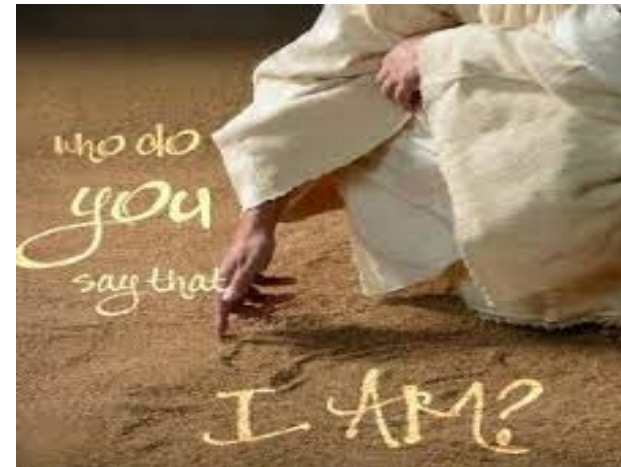
"Who is Jesus Christ? Still a living question. No amount of acquired knowledge about him will ever replace a personal knowledge of Jesus which results from a progressive sharing in his life, to the extent of losing oneself and encountering the cross with him. The cross: place of truth for the christian, the test which decides if one is truly a disciple of this unexpected Christ, hidden under the features of the Suffering Servant. To share the life of someone we love, is that not the very logic of friendship? It is to this vocation of friendship with Jesus that we are invited. That is what it is to be a christian."

Glenstal Bible Missal

***TWENTY FOURTH SUNDAY
ORDINARY TIME***

Year B

12th September 2021



Today we come to chapter 8; roughly half way through Mark's Gospel & it is very much a turning point. Up to now, Jesus has been living & ministering around Galilee. He has called his disciples to him & gradually they have come to know him as 'The Christ', the 'anointed one', the One who has come to save. It is through sharing his life that they have come to know him; we too, must walk with the Lord. The rest of Mark's Gospel is centred around Jerusalem and Jesus will reveal that his victory will come about through his suffering and death. Three times he will announce his passion and after each prophecy, there is a call to follow him.

Opening Prayer

Look upon us, O God, Creator and ruler of all things, and,
that we may feel the working of your mercy, grant that we may
serve you with all our heart.

Isaiah 50:5-9

The Lord has opened my ear. For my part, I made no resistance, neither did I turn away. I offered my back to those who struck me, my cheeks to those who tore at my beard; I did not cover my face against insult and spittle.

The Lord comes to my help, so that I am untouched by the insults. So, too, I set my face like flint; I know I shall not be shamed.

My vindicator is here at hand. Does anyone start proceedings against me? Then let us go to court together. Who thinks he has a case against me? Let him approach me. The Lord is coming to my help, who will dare to condemn me?

Today we hear the third of four songs found in Isaiah (chapters 40 – 55) telling of a mysterious figure - *the Lord's Servant or Suffering Servant* - who, through following the Lord's way, will suffer and die, and as a consequence, will bring life to all. Who Isaiah envisaged this figure to be, we do not know, but today, as Christians, we clearly understand the prophecy to be fulfilled in Christ. In today's passage we learn that the servant of God welcomes trials, because he sees it as a way to personal freedom and a way of redemption for his brothers and sisters, and because he has confidence in the strength of the Lord.

Psalms 114(116):1-6,8-9

*I love the Lord for he has heard the cry of my appeal;
for he turned his ear to me in the day when I called him.*

*They surrounded me, the snares of death, with the anguish of the tomb;
they caught me, sorrow and distress. I called on the Lord's name.*

O Lord, my God, deliver me! How gracious is the Lord, and just; our God has compassion. The Lord protects the simple hearts; I was helpless so he saved me.

*He has kept my soul from death, my eyes from tears and my feet from stumbling.
I will walk in the presence of the Lord in the land of the living.*

James 2:14-18

Take the case, my brothers, of someone who has never done a single good act but claims that he has faith. Will that faith save him? If one of the brothers or one of the sisters is in need of clothes and has not enough food to live on, and one of you says to them, 'I wish you well; keep yourself warm and eat plenty', without giving them these bare necessities of life, then what good is that? Faith is like that: if good works do not go with it, it is quite dead.

This is the way to talk to people of that kind: 'You say you have faith and I have good deeds; I will prove to you that I have faith by showing you my good deeds – now you prove to me that you have faith without any good deeds to show.'

We continue listening to the Letter, or exhortation of James, the leader of the Church in Jerusalem. Today we hear the truth, that faith, which is not realised in deeds, remains purely theoretical or abstract. "When a faith is truly a communion with the person of Christ, it does the works of Christ and so gives proof that it is alive". Glenstal Bible Missal

Alleluia, alleluia! I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, says the Lord;
No one can come to the Father except through me. **Alleluia!**

(Gospel overleaf)

Prayer over the Offerings

Look with favour on our supplications, O Lord, and in your kindness accept these, your servants' offerings, that what each has offered to the honour of your name may serve the salvation of all.

Prayer after Communion

May the working of this heavenly gift, O Lord, we pray, take possession of our minds and bodies, so that its effects, and not our own desires, may always prevail in us.