

**Mark 9:38-43,45,47-48**

John said to Jesus, 'Master, we saw a man who is not one of us casting out devils in your name; and because he was not one of us we tried to stop him.' But Jesus said, 'You must not stop him: no one who works a miracle in my name is likely to speak evil of me. Anyone who is not against us is for us.'

'If anyone gives you a cup of water to drink just because you belong to Christ, then I tell you solemnly, he will most certainly not lose his reward.'

'But anyone who is an obstacle to bring down one of these little ones who have faith, would be better thrown into the sea with a great millstone round his neck. And if your hand should cause you to sin, cut it off; it is better for you to enter into life crippled, than to have two hands and go to hell, into the fire that cannot be put out. And if your foot should cause you to sin, cut it off; it is better for you to enter into life lame, than to have two feet and be thrown into hell. And if your eye should cause you to sin, tear it out; it is better for you to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell where their worm does not die nor their fire go out.'

Christ's teaching in today's Gospel... "May mean excising some habit, to abandon some pleasure, to give up some friendship, to cut out some thing which has become very dear to us, which has become a part of our very lives, in order to be fully obedient to the will of God. This is not a matter with which anyone can deal for anyone else. It is solely a matter of a man's individual conscience, and it means that, if there is anything in our lives which is coming between us and a perfect obedience to the will of God, however dear that thing or person is to us, however much habit and custom may have made it part of our lives, it must be rooted out. The rooting out may be painful... but if we are to know real *life*, real happiness and real peace it must go." (W. Barclay, *The Gospel of Mark*)

***TWENTY SIXTH SUNDAY  
ORDINARY TIME***

***Year B***

**26th September 2021**

**The Lord Knows His Own**



***Harvest festival***

Last week Jesus taught that anyone who wants to be first in the kingdom of God, must make himself last & servant of all. It is against this backdrop that we find the disciples arguing yet again, this time because they have seen others using Jesus' name, to great affect. "Lord, we'll go and stop them, because they are not one of us." But Jesus says, No! God's Spirit is not your exclusive possession. It blows where it will. Instead, open your lives to God's Spirit. Seek to build the kingdom of heaven on earth. Cut away everything that hinders you, personal ambition, earthly rewards, sin... Seek God's ways, not man's.

**Opening Prayer**

O God, who manifest your almighty power above all by pardoning and showing mercy, bestow, we pray, your grace abundantly upon us and make those hastening to attain your promises heirs to the treasures of heaven.

### **Numbers 11:25-29**

The Lord came down in the Cloud. He spoke with Moses, but took some of the spirit that was on him and put it on the seventy elders. When the spirit came on them they prophesied, but not again.

Two men had stayed back in the camp; one was called Eldad and the other Medad. The spirit came down on them; though they had not gone to the Tent, their names were enrolled among the rest. These began to prophesy in the camp. The young man ran to tell this to Moses, 'Look,' he said 'Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp.' Then said Joshua the son of Nun, who had served Moses from his youth, 'My Lord Moses, stop them!' Moses answered him, 'Are you jealous on my account? If only the whole people of the Lord were prophets, and the Lord gave his Spirit to them all!'

The Book of Numbers is part of the Pentateuch (the first five Books of the Old testament). Traditionally it is ascribed to Moses and it presents an account of the 40 year period of Israel's wandering in the desert before entry into the Promised Land (1446 – 1406 BC). In today's passage, we hear how God shares his spirit with 70 elders, chosen by Moses for leadership, but God's spirit also comes upon two others, Eldad & Medad. Far from taking offence, Moses wished that all the people would be filled with the Spirit of God. Let us be open to the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

### **Psalm 18(19):8,10,12-14**

*The law of the Lord is perfect, it revives the soul.*

*The rule of the Lord is to be trusted, it gives wisdom to the simple.*

*The fear of the Lord is holy, abiding for ever.*

*The decrees of the Lord are truth and all of them just.*

*So in them your servant finds instruction; great reward is in their keeping.*

*But who can detect all his errors? From hidden faults acquit me.*

*From presumption restrain your servant and let it not rule me.*

*Then shall I be blameless, clean from grave sin.*

### **James 5:1-6**

An answer for the rich. Start crying, weep for the miseries that are coming to you. Your wealth is all rotting, your clothes are all eaten up by moths. All your gold and your silver are corroding away, and the same corrosion will be your own sentence, and eat into your body. It was a burning fire that you stored up as your treasure for the last days. Labourers mowed your fields, and you cheated them – listen to the wages that you kept back, calling out; realise that the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts. On earth you have had a life of comfort and luxury; in the time of slaughter you went on eating to your heart's content. It was you who condemned the innocent and killed them; they offered you no resistance.

Today we come to the end of the Letter of St James. Throughout this Letter, James has shown his antagonism towards the rich. Why? He sees the rich as having gained their wealth at the poor man's expense and is arrogant because of his possessions. He is typically evil because he places his confidence in the world and not in God. How do we look upon our possessions? How do we use them to help the poor of our world?

**Alleluia, alleluia! Your word is truth, O Lord:  
consecrate us in the truth. Alleluia!**

*(Gospel overleaf)*

### **Prayer over the Offerings**

Grant us, O merciful God, that this our offering may find acceptance with you and that through it the wellspring of all blessing may be laid open before us.

### **Prayer after Communion**

May this heavenly mystery, O Lord, restore us in mind and body, that we may be coheirs in glory with Christ, to whose suffering we are united whenever we proclaim his Death.