

## Scripture Reflection by Father Dave

### 24<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

(Isaiah 50: 5 – 9; James 2: 14 – 18; Mark 8: 27 – 35)

Today's Gospel selection explains the basis of our Faith as acceptance of Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the Living God and our Lord & Savior. It also tells us that Christ Jesus became our Savior by his suffering, death and Resurrection. Finally, it outlines the three conditions of Christian discipleship – namely, denying oneself, taking up one's cross, and following Jesus.

Jesus saw aspects of His own life and mission foreshadowed in Isaiah's "Servant Songs." Hence, a large portion of one of these is presented as our first Scripture Reading for this weekend. Like the servant described in the passage from Isaiah, Jesus' life was one of radical obedience and conformity to God's will. Thus, the Servant passage provides background for the revelation of Jesus as the suffering Messiah.

In the passage from the second letter of St James to the Church, we are reminded that suffering is not only something to be accepted but also something to be alleviated. James explains how our Faith in Jesus, the Messiah, should help us to alleviate the sufferings of others by our works of mercy, both the corporal and the spiritual works of mercy.

And in the selection from Mark's Gospel, in response to Peter's profession of Faith in Jesus as the Messiah and Savior, Jesus then foretells for the first of three times of His passion, death, and ultimate Resurrection.

Jesus wants to become a living, present reality for us – loving us, forgiving us, helping us, transforming our lives and outlook on life and building a personal relationship with us. The knowledge of Jesus as Lord and personal Savior needs to become a living, personal experience for each Christian that draws us closer to Him. Here at St Regis Parish, we have the "Discover Christ" program that begins later this month of September. Much has been advertised about it. Much can be learned about the love Christ has for each of us. Much can be learned about how we live His love for others.

Is Jesus Christ simply an interesting historical figure that we read about? Or, like St Peter, can we profess Him as our Lord and our Messiah. Can we accept the crosses that will come into our lives, or like St Peter will we rebuke the Lord for allowing such crosses to enter our lives.

Just Who is Jesus Christ for you? Who do *YOU* think He is? Peter and the other disciples gave their answers. What is your answer to Jesus' question? Let's pray that we come to know Jesus more than what we can gain from reading books. Let's pray that we not be afraid to develop a personal relationship with Him – and in doing so know and experience the love and care he has for each of us.

Let us pray for the Conversion of the World  
& for Peace.

### Saints / Celebrations for this week

**September 14 – The Triumph of the Holy Cross** – St Paul the Apostle spoke of the power of Christ's Cross. According to tradition, the Empress Helena discovered the Lord's Cross in Jerusalem on September 14, 320. Five years later, a great church was built on Mount Calvary by Emperor Constantine to shelter the holy relic. Parts of the wood of the Cross were sent to the major cities of Christendom, where they were shown to the faithful on this special feast. We may want to reflect on those words from time to time that we pray during Lent – "*We worship You, O Christ, and we praise You, because by Your Cross You have redeemed the world.*"

**September 15 Our Lady of Sorrows** – This Feast, popular in the Middle Ages, follows the feast of Mary's birth on September 8. It recalls the special bond between Jesus and Mary and reminds us of the torment and suffering of Christ. Mary suffered greatly as the Mother of God, and the pain that she felt was real. The feast of Our Lady of Sorrows recalls the succession of sorrows that Mary experienced during her earthly life: the prophecy she heard from Simeon at the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple, the flight into Egypt to avoid Herod's attempt to kill the new-born King, the three-day loss of Jesus on the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, meeting Jesus on the way to Calvary, the hours that she stood beneath the Cross, the removal of Jesus from the Cross, and the burial of Jesus in the tomb.

**BULLETIN REFLECTION by Father Rody**  
**SEPT. 12, 2021...24<sup>TH</sup> SUN YR-B...MK 8, 27-35**

**27**Now Jesus and his disciples set out for the villages of Caesarea Philippi. Along the way he asked his disciples, ***“Who do people say that I am?”***

**28**They said in reply, “John the Baptist, others Elijah, still others one of the prophets.”

**29**And he asked them, ***“But who do you say that I am?”*** Peter said to him in reply, “You are the Messiah.”

**Verse 27**...Who do people say that I am?

This question is addressed to people in general and has gained a particular answer.

**Verse 29**...But who do you say that I am?

Now it is the same question raised on verse 27 but addressed to different audience (you=apostles in particular) and Peter gave another answer.

What do verses 27 and 29 tell us? People (in general) and you (in particular) somehow describe a kind of relationship established between God and mankind.

**People (in general)** is a kind relationship which is so common, plain acquaintances with formal exchange of pleasantries...hi hello how are you just wave hands and that would do. No depth in this kind of relationship.

But, **you (in particular)** is a kind of relationship that you know the other person, his ups and downs...his character that you need tons of understanding for you to bear with him...his inmost thoughts that all you can do is lift him up to your God rather than judge him. Now we speak of depth here.

Then, how are we to answer this question with depth-with meaning? Instead of buying books and start citing noted theologians as

per their understanding of who God is, why don't you just sit down and reflect on your personal experiences...what did you tell your God when you were wanting decades ago...did God listen to you...did He answer you...how did God answer you...we want to hear your story...with your past life, make God alive at this very moment. For me, this is the best way to answer the question and for sure our Lord Jesus would really be happy to listen to your stories for the nth time.

