



CELEBRATING AT HOME

22ND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Finding real life (Matthew 16:21-27)



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Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

The Lord is here, present among us.

**We are gathered with the whole Church
in this moment of prayer.**

Preparing to hear the Word

We have been called by God
to be the Church,
**the Body of Christ and the Kingdom of God
in this world.**

O God, your Word feeds our hungers and breaks open
the compassion of our human hearts.

**May the fire of your Word enliven our actions to
heal, help, touch and bring hope to our world.**

Scripture Reading *(Matthew 16:21-27)*

Jesus began to make it clear to his disciples that he was destined to go to Jerusalem and suffer grievously at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, to be put to death and to be raised up on the third day. Then, taking him aside, Peter started to remonstrate with him. 'Heaven preserve you Lord,' he said. 'This must not happen to you.' But he turned and said to Peter, 'Get behind me, Satan! You are an obstacle in my path, because the way you think is not God's but man's.'

Then Jesus said to his disciples, '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 will find it. What, then, will a man gain if he wins the whole world and ruins his life? Or what has a man to offer in exchange for his life?

For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and, when he does, he will reward each one according to his behaviour.'

Reflection - *Finding real life*

What a contrast there is between last Sunday's Gospel, when Peter was proclaimed the 'rock' on which the church would be built, and this Sunday when Jesus rebukes him for being a different kind of rock - a 'stumbling block'!

When Jesus starts to talk about his suffering, death and resurrection, it's more than Peter can cope with - "This must not happen to you." This is exactly what Jesus was afraid of when he bound the disciples to silence about his true identity in last Sunday's Gospel. He was afraid that they would think of him as a warrior leading a victorious uprising against the Roman occupation of Israel - the popular image of the Messiah in Jesus' day.

Last week, Jesus proclaimed Peter 'blessed' because of his God-given insight into who Jesus is. Now Peter is 'Satan' because it is not God-given insight, but human thinking, he now shows.

Can we cope with having a shepherd-king rather than a warrior-king as our God and Saviour?

Jesus then starts talking about the call of discipleship. First of all, it has to be freely chosen. Discipleship is not something which can be forced on people. Second, the disciple must learn to put God and others at the centre of his/her life. This is not some pious idea. People in true, loving relationships, especially parents, know exactly what it means to 'take up your cross' and follow Jesus by doing loving acts of service everyday - to put another's needs ahead of your own. Such people save their lives by living human life as Jesus taught and as God intended.

Those who set about trying to 'save' their lives through power, wealth and a comfortable life eventually lose the little life they have. Nothing can prevent the moment of death when all that is stripped away and becomes meaningless. That's what the lines about gaining the whole world and ruining your life mean.

At the end of the day, the faithfulness of the disciple, shown in loving deeds, will be rewarded.

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What Jesus says about discipleship is a very different way to live and seems totally opposite to the values of modern society where we think we are in control of our destiny; where life is about amassing wealth and living comfortably for ourselves rather than for others.

Prayers of Intercession

Bless our hands
that reach into the lives of so many people.

Bless our feet
that stand firmly on the rock of the gospel.

Bless our hearts
that hold far more grief than we can carry,
and far more life than we dare to believe.

Lord's Prayer

Formed by the teaching and example of Jesus,
we pray:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

Closing Prayer

Ever-loving God,
every good thing comes from you.
fill our minds with insight into love,
so that every thought may grow in wisdom
and all our efforts may be filled with your peace.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Blessing

May the grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with us now and always. Amen.



Journey into the Light

This resource is presented by the Carmelites for use by individuals, families and small groups as a prayerful celebration of the Word of God to help prepare us to celebrate the Eucharist with our worshipping communities. We are conscious that Christ is present not only in the Blessed Sacrament but also in the Scriptures and in our hearts. We are also conscious of the many people who, for various reasons including sickness and infirmity, cannot physically attend the Eucharist. Even when we are on our own we remain part of the Body of Christ.

In the room you decide to use for this prayer you could have a lighted candle, a crucifix and the Bible. These symbols help keep us mindful of the sacredness of our time of prayer and can help us feel connected with our local worshipping communities.

This text is arranged with parts for a leader and for all to pray, but the leader's parts can be shared among those present.

As you use this prayer know that the Carmelites will be remembering in our prayer all the members of our family.



The Carmelites
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