

Theme of the Week - The Son of Man

In last week's Gospel we learn of Jesus healing a deaf man. When we reflected on that Gospel we didn't just learn of Jesus undertaking a miracle in front of others. We heard that the man's role (the man who was cured) in society was going to change. He now didn't have to rely on others, but now could go out and help others. The man's perspective or understanding had changed due to the miracle of Jesus. In Sunday's Gospel we hear of Peter perspective being changed by Jesus. Peter was asked by Jesus, 'who do you say I am' and Peter responds by saying 'you are the Christ'. Try to put yourself in Peter's position at this time, you have been asked a really important question by your Messiah and you get it right, surely Peter must be really proud of himself. He understood where others didn't, Peter must be on cloud nine! Then soon after Peter is called SATAN by his Messiah! Peter must be asking what have I done wrong!

Jesus goes on to talk about his fate and Peter questions this. Peter thinks the Messiah should be feared, not killed! We want a powerful saviour, not a loser. Peter (like us) does not understand and therefore cannot accept the fact that only love can bring healing, and that only the offering of one's love can bring about the desired Kingdom of God, a kingdom of justice, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. This is why Jesus calls him SATAN. The word *satan* in Hebrew means *accuser*, an enemy who stands in the way and who accuses you in front of a judge. There is a message here for us all; not to let the stumbling blocks of our everyday lives get in the way of our journey to God. We do say "yes" with Peter and the others: "You are the Christ" and hosanna and hooray! but when the going gets tough and we are called upon to be suffering servants, aren't we like Peter then too? Don't we begin then to draw the line and say, that is not what I meant, this is not it at all, this is not for me at all. We too can be like Peter when Jesus calls him *satan* every time we try to find a shortcut from the Cross, that is the offering of our own life for the good of others. The world is full of people who acknowledge that Jesus is the Son of God, that he was a wise and loving person, that his teaching is relevant even today. But they **WOULD NOT FOLLOW HIM ON THE CROSS**, they would not give up the things they are attached to, the lifestyles they have chosen, their priorities, their habitual sins etc.

Jesus, who died for us on a cross, said "If anyone wants to be a follower of mine let them take their cross and follow me." There is nothing in Jesus' message that says only if it suits you or when you are ready or if it's not too hard for you or only on Sundays or feast days. Now is the time! Look at the Crucifix on the wall or on the prayer table. Hold it up, really take a close look at it. What does it teach us? What does it mean to you? If we are looking for a triumphant Christianity we must look closely at the way Jesus triumphed. To accept the cross means to live as Jesus did. Jesus promised that those who do this will live forever. This week how can you be

Intentional and Prophetic in taking up your Cross and be a true follower of Jesus?

The Son of Man

Weekly Reflections
15th September 2024
24th Sunday in Ordinary time



From the Gospel of 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.'

Prayer for the Week

Lord Jesus Christ,

We find it hard to walk the Way of the Cross. Teach us to have courage and faith in you at times of difficulty so we too can take up our own Cross in order to be true disciples of you.

Through Christ our Lord,

Amen

Day 1

Jesus asks his disciples who people say he is. What answer does Peter give?

Why is Peter right whereas the others are wrong?

Why does Peter's relationship with Jesus help him know who He is?

Day 2

Why does Jesus go on to call Peter SATAN when Peter challenges Jesus on his destiny?

Following Jesus can be challenging for us. What do you find the most challenging moments in being a follower of Jesus?

Day 3

We all have our own Crosses to carry. How do we ensure then in our times of difficulty we too can triumph as Jesus did?

How can you help others when their Cross is too big a burden to carry?

Catholic Social Teaching - Common Good

Our actions have an impact on everyone. When we make decisions, we should consider the good of all.

The common good is about respecting the rights and responsibilities of all people and leaving no one behind.

"Beside the good of the individual, there is a good that is linked to living in society: the common good. It is the good of 'all of us'... To desire the common good and strive towards it is a requirement of justice and charity." Pope Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate*, 7

We work to build a world where everyone, including the earth, can flourish. Ultimately, no one can truly flourish if another person is hungry, lost or abandoned, nor can humankind flourish while our common home is degraded and exploited for the good of the few.

How this half term can you promote the Common Good in all that you do in St Joseph's and society?

