

[119] **TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME A**

FIRST READING

The word of the Lord god has meant derision for me.

A reading from the book of the prophet Jeremiah 20:7-9

Jeremiah spoke to the Lord and said:
“You tricked me, Lord, and I was really fooled.
With your might power you defeated me.”

“No one ever stops sneering or telling jokes about me.
All I can say to anyone is, ‘Death and destruction!’

“Your message has brought me insults and abuse.
Sometimes I say to myself,
 ‘I won’t think about you or mention your name.’
But your message is like a fire burning inside me,
 and I can’t keep quiet.”

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

63:1abc, 2-3, 4-5

R. (2b) My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my God.

You are my God. I worship you.
In my heart, I long for you,
as I would long for a stream.

R. My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my God.

I have seen your power
and your glory
in the place of worship.
Your love means more
than life to me,
and I praise you.

R. My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my God.

As long as I live,

I will pray to you.
I will sing joyful praises
and be filled with excitement
like a guest at a banquet.

R. My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my God.

SECOND READING

Offer your bodies as a living, holy sacrifice.

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans 12:1-2

Dear friends, God is good.
So I beg you to offer your bodies to him
as a living sacrifice, pure and pleasing.
That's the most sensible way to serve God.

Don't be like the people of this world,
but let God change the way you think.
Then you will know
how to do everything that is good and pleasing to him.

The word of the Lord.

ALLELUIA

See Ephesians 1:17-18

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

May the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ
enlighten the eyes of our heart,
that we might see how great is the hope
to which we are called.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

GOSPEL

All who wish to follow me must deny themselves.

† A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew 16:21-25

Jesus began telling his disciples what would happen to him.
He said, "I must go to Jerusalem.
There the nation's leaders, the chief priests,
and the teachers of the Law of Moses will make me suffer terribly.
I will be killed,
but three days later I will rise to life."

Peter took Jesus aside and told him to stop talking like that.
He said, "Lord, surely God won't let this happen to you!"

Jesus turned to Peter and said, "Satan, get away from me!
You're in my way because you think like everyone else
and not like God."

Then Jesus said to his disciples:
"If any of you want to be my followers,
you must forget about yourself.
You must take up your cross and follow me.
If you want to save your life,
you will destroy it.

"But if you give up your life for me,
you will find it."

The gospel of the Lord.

TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME

Prayer:

Dear Jesus,

Help us to live as your follower no matter how hard it may be. Give us the strength to do what is right and to show the world how much you love us.

In your name we pray.

Amen

Readings:

Jeremiah 20:7-9

Psalm 63:1abc, 2-3, 4-5

Romans 12:1-2

Matthew 16:21-25

Reflection:

What does it mean to be a follower of Jesus? Once Jesus comes into our lives we cannot act and speak and live like we don't know Him. Knowing that He loves us so much that He let himself be hurt and killed for us makes us want to live like Him. The disciples left their homes, their families, their friends and their jobs to follow Jesus. Many people said they were crazy and didn't like them after that. The disciples didn't care, though, because they knew that being a follower of Jesus means living our lives the way that Jesus wants us to live. He wants us to follow the 10 Commandments, to love everyone and to make the world a better place. These are not always the easy thing to do or the most popular, especially today. For example, it is hard to love and be nice to someone who is always mean to us. It is hard to tell a group of our friends that you don't like it when they tell jokes or talk about other kids.

Living as followers of Jesus is something we will do for our entire lives in many different ways. As kids you are not expected to move away from your home and your family like the disciples, but you are called to be kind and fair, to do what you can to make your part of the world better, and to listen and obey your parents, teachers and the Church. You are also asked to listen as you grow to hear what else God calls you to do as you become an adult. It may be to be a Priest or a Sister, a lay missionary, a married person ministering in a parish, a religion teacher, or a parent raising children who will follow Jesus. There are many possibilities but they will all in some way be a reflection of your love for Jesus.

Activity:

This game is played similar to "Hot Potato." Ask the children to sit in a circle on the floor. Give them one cross (made out of wood, cardboard, construction paper, etc.). Start a timer or music. The children are to pass the cross until the timer goes off or the music stops. The child holding the cross then gets to answer a question. No one else may answer. All of the questions should present situations where the child must decide how they would respond as a follower of Jesus. With older kids you can ask follow-up questions probing why they answered the way they did and how the required action might be difficult. Once the question has been answered start the timer or music again and repeat.

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Sample questions:

On the playground a girl is being teased by another group of girls, as a follower of Jesus, what should you do?

Someone cuts in front of you in the line for lunch. What do you do as a follower of Jesus?

You spent a lot of time working on a picture and someone tears it up. How do you respond as a follower of Jesus?

There is a kid that never has anyone to play with. What do you do as a follower of Jesus?

Some kids in your class do not pay attention or participate at church. They make fun of you because you do. How do you respond as a follower of Jesus.

You get angry at your little brother and yell at her. What do you do as a follower of Jesus?