

Twenty-Ninth Sunday of Ordinary Time

Gospel Reading

21st October 2018

Mark 10:35-45 (shorter form Mark 10:42-45)

Jesus teaches that those who wish to be great must be the servant of all.

Background on the Gospel Reading

In this Sunday's Gospel, we continue to read from the section of Mark's Gospel that reports Jesus' journey to Jerusalem. Last Sunday we heard Jesus lament the particular challenges those with many possessions face in order to enter the Kingdom of God.

Jesus then predicts his passion to the Twelve, who are amazed and afraid. In this part of Mark's Gospel, Jesus' words to his closest disciples seem to be

intended to prepare them for the events that will occur in Jerusalem.

In today's Gospel, James and John ask to be given seats of honor when Jesus enters into his glory. Once again, the disciples seem to be selective in what they hear Jesus say. They want to share Jesus' glory, but do not appear to understand that his glory will be preceded by his suffering. Jesus notes their lack of understanding and predicts the suffering they will endure for the sake of the Gospel. Jesus says that the honor they seek is not his to give. When the other ten hear what James and John have asked, Mark reports that they are indignant. Jesus takes the opportunity to teach them.

Jesus explains the importance of service and sacrifice in the life of a disciple. In particular, he seems to be preparing the Twelve for their leadership roles in the emerging Christian community.

Echoing the Gospel we heard

several weeks ago (on the [25th Sunday in Ordinary Time](#), Mark 9:33-37), Jesus acknowledges that his teaching is

countercultural.

In today's Gospel, Jesus contrasts the dynamics within the community of disciples with those shown by the rulers of the Gentiles. Following Jesus' example of sacrificial love continues to be countercultural in our day as well. We might take this opportunity to consider our models of authority and examine our own exercise of authority. On whose example do we model our leadership?

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