

Take 2 With Jesus
Daily Reflections on the Sunday Gospel
Week beginning Sunday 12th Sept

Jesus asks for our response.

This week's reflections are based on the Gospel reading for the 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B, Mk 8:27-35. Further reflections on this Gospel can be found at <http://www.prayasyoucan.com.au/sunday/show/599>.

Sunday

*Jesus put this question to his disciples,
'Who do people say I am?'*
(Mk 8:27)

Knowing what other people have to say about Jesus is part of the way we come to know him ourselves. What they believe (or don't believe for that matter) can enrich our faith and clarify the unique relationship we each have with him.

Loving Jesus, let me learn from what other people have to say about you, but do not allow me to substitute their beliefs for the unique relationship you desire to have with me.

Pray the words that Jesus taught us...Our Father, who art in heaven...

Continue your prayer through this day by pondering on how the faith of others that has nourished your faith.

Monday

But you,' Jesus asked them, 'Who do you say I am?'

(Mk 8:29)

This is one of the most important questions in the Gospel, directed to each one of us no less than to Peter and the disciples. How we answer it determines the shape of our faith and even our lives. Do not underestimate the challenge it is to look straight at Jesus and hear him asking you the question....and then to enter your heart to find your answer.

Loving Jesus, you ask me this question to draw me out of myself into the embrace of your love. Touch my mind and heart that I may learn who you want to be in my life.

Pray the words that Jesus taught us...Our Father, who art in heaven...

Continue your prayer through this day by pondering what images you would use to answer Jesus' question.

Tuesday

Peter said, 'You are the Christ!'

And Jesus gave them strict orders not to tell anyone about him.

(Mk 8:29)

This is odd. In Mark's Gospel, Jesus has been teaching the disciples to bring them to this very understanding ...and then he orders them to silence. The disciples had their own ideas of what the Christ should be like but Jesus wasn't going to be boxed in by their narrow-minded worldly expectations.

Loving Jesus, allow me to sit in silence before the mystery of who you are and open my mind and heart to the wonder of your ways.

Pray the words that Jesus taught us...Our Father, who art in heaven...

Continue your prayer through this day by pondering the times when you have not understood the ways of God and were reduced to silence.

Wednesday

*Then Jesus began to teach them that the Son of Man had to suffer grievously,
to be rejected...to be put to death...and to rise again.*

(Mk 8:31)

From here on in this Gospel, Jesus tries to teach the disciples about how central his death and resurrection are to having faith in him...and they just don't get it. But then how much do we? Ask yourself, if you were designing salvation, would you put a crucified man dying in agony at its centre?

Loving Jesus, you know that I am one with your disciples in stumbling over the place of suffering in your plan of salvation. Teach me, lead me, guide me as you did your disciples.

Pray the words that Jesus taught us...Our Father, who art in heaven...

Continue your prayer through this day by recalling how your faith has helped you deal with suffering in the past.

Thursday

Then taking Jesus aside, Peter started to remonstrate with him.

(Mk 8:12)

Well, you have to hand it to Peter, he was pretty open with Jesus about how he thought Jesus should run salvation – no whinging or complaining behind Jesus' back. Mind you, he did try to do it quietly, away from the crowd. It wouldn't have been good to correct the Master in front of all those people. I wonder what we would say, if we took Jesus aside for such a private and candid chat.

Loving Jesus, you know that I am sometimes not totally honest with you about the way you offer salvation in my life. Give me some share in Peter's honesty.

Pray the words that Jesus taught us...Our Father, who art in heaven...

Continue your prayer through this day by saying what you honestly want to say about God's ways.

Friday

*Jesus rebuked Peter and said to him,
'Get behind me Satan!'
(Mk 8:33)*

Wow, that's more than a bit rough. Peter had Jesus' best interests at heart and he couldn't have gotten a worse rebuff. The only other time Jesus is so savage is with the religious leaders when they use 'their' rules to cut out the weak and poor from salvation. Maybe both had, at base, the same thing – a form of salvation based on success.

Loving Jesus, open me to accepting that it is through the Cross that you unleash divine life, forgiveness and love in our world...and in my life.

Pray the words that Jesus taught us...Our Father, who art in heaven...

Continue your prayer through this day by noticing how much value you put on worldly success.

Saturday

*Jesus said,
'For anyone who wants to save his or her life, will lose it;
but anyone who loses his or her life for my sake...will save it.'
(Mk 8:35)*

This reversal of expectations is at the heart of faith. If we accept Jesus as Christ, we can no longer be the centre of our universe. We have to undergo a Copernican revolution and, at times, this will feel like death. Jesus does not expect us to 'like' this. He doesn't tell us to 'want' it but we do have to be prepared to accept it when it comes.

Loving Jesus, be with me in the small daily dyings to myself that you ask me to do when you call me to love like you.

Pray the words that Jesus taught us...Our Father, who art in heaven...

Continue your prayer through this day by noticing times when you can be more loving by simply denying your preferences in a situation.