

Take 2 With Jesus

Daily Reflections for the Year of Grace

Week beginning Sunday 19th September.

Jesus asks us to welcome him.

This week's reflections are based on the Gospel reading for the 25th Sunday Ordinary Time Year B, Mk (9:30-37). Further reflections on this Gospel can be found at <http://www.prayasyoucan.com.au/sunday/show/116/gospel>.

Sunday

Jesus said,

*'Three days after the Son of Man has been put to death, he will rise again.'
But the disciples did not understand what he said and were too afraid to ask.
(Mk 9:31-32)*

Jesus has taken his disciples aside to give them intensive instruction about what will happen to him in Jerusalem. Even in this intimate gathering, they allow themselves to be dominated by their fears and close themselves off from even asking about God's ways.

Loving Jesus, you know how much my fears prevent the growth of grace in my life. Release me from the fear that closes down my mind and stymies me from accepting the rich grace you offer.

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

Continue your prayer through this day by noticing what fears you have and bringing them to Jesus.

Monday

*Jesus asked them,
'What were you arguing about on the road?'
(Mk 9:33)*

We can be certain of one thing here – they weren't arguing about what Jesus had been teaching them in order to understand it. They were arguing to ignore Jesus' teaching. How often our fights are about irrelevant things because we lack the courage to face our real issues.

Loving Jesus, you know how I take minor issues too seriously even to the extent of arguing over them. Challenge me when my values are awry, help me to realise what is truly important and what is worth arguing about.

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

Continue your prayer through this day by pondering what issues you invest in emotionally and ask yourself whether these really matter.

Tuesday

*The disciples said nothing
because they had been arguing which of them was the greatest.
(Mk 9:34)*

Sullen silence! One of the best ways to close down a conversation. You can imagine how Jesus' question brought them to their senses and they realised what dills they were. So rather than admit it, they went silent. Sullen silence might work with you or me...but not with Jesus. He will not let them play that game.

Loving Jesus, you know how often I close down communication when I don't like the truth or a differing opinion. Give me courage and openness to the truth that will help me grow into your love and life.

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

Continue your prayer through this day by trying to remain communicating in a conversation that feels sticky.

Wednesday

*Jesus said,
'If anyone wants to be first,
he or she must make themselves last of all and servant of all'
(Mk 9:35)*

But we don't want to be overlooked! We don't want to be taken for granted! We need to be affirmed. Jesus knows that our deepest and truest affirmation comes from God and that, as we serve like he did, we will know the divine love upholding us and giving us the finest of all affirmations – that of being the beloved of God.

Loving Jesus, give me the courage to trust in your love and affirmation so that I may serve as you did relying on the power of your loving Spirit within me.

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

Continue your prayer through this day by noticing the times when you can serve inconspicuously.

Thursday

*Jesus took a little child, set him in front of them,
and put his arms around him.
(Mk 9:36)*

The term for 'little child' in Jesus' own language, Aramaic, also meant servant. So, here, Jesus is probably not commending the innocence or cuteness of children to us but rather their lack of importance. Jesus offers the child in contrast to the argumentative behaviour of the disciples. A child, a servant, in such a situation would have stood and watched as they had no power, no rights to assert.

Loving Jesus, let me be loved and treasured by you not because of any gifts or talents that I deem important but rather because I am created in God's image and likeness and loved by you.

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

Continue your prayer through this day by affirming regularly how precious you are in the eyes of God.

Friday

*Jesus said,
'Anyone who welcomes one of these children welcomes me.'
(Mk 9:37)*

Jesus identifies himself with the people of little or no consequence in his society. This is one of the hardest lessons for us to learn. We seem to naturally stratify society and care for those who can look after us in return. To welcome, receive, embrace those who can do nothing for us does not come naturally but rather comes from the transforming power of the Spirit.

Loving Jesus, send me your Spirit that filled with grace I can search out those who are overlooked amongst the people I live with.

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

Continue your prayer through this day by noticing who gets overlooked amongst the people you work with and try to welcome them.

Saturday

*Jesus said,
'Anyone who welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me.'
(Mk 9:37)*

Here Jesus personifies the very self-effacement that he wants us to practise. He doesn't want to be welcomed for his own self-glorification but for God's. Yet we know that God did glorify him in turn. This is one of the sureties of our faith – that what we give up in loving service to others will be given back to us transformed by God's gracious love.

Loving Jesus, let me trust the process of self-effacement because you have modelled it to me. May your example be the strength and guide of my daily life.

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

Continue your prayer through this day by asking Jesus what he wants to reveal to you in all the people you meet this day.

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