

This Week's Readings

First Reading: Isaiah 50: 5-9.

The Lord helps his suffering servant.

Second Reading: James 2: 14-18.

Our faith is dead if it does not result in good actions.

Gospel: Mark 8: 27-35.

Jesus foretells that the Christ must suffer.



Points for Reflection

In today's **Second Reading**, St James reminds us that it is not enough to adhere to Jesus Christ merely through intellectual belief.

As the **Gospel** puts it clearly, we must share in Christ's sufferings, in his self-giving love for others, if we are to share in his glory. I think that, like the Apostles, we, too, need to be reminded again and again by Jesus of how salvation must be brought about according to the Father's will.

Today's Gospel episode is certainly a turning point in Jesus' life; it should become also the key to the understanding of our Christian life.

- Up to that moment, Jesus had clearly wanted to keep a policy of secrecy as to the nature of his work as a Messiah. He had forbidden people to talk about his miracles, and the demons to confess their defeat. Now, all of a sudden, Jesus not only abandons this attitude, but also openly demands of his disciples a profession of faith concerning him.
- Peter, on behalf of all the Apostles, proclaims that Jesus is the expected Messiah. Jesus, therefore, is not regarded any more only as a Rabbi (a teacher) and a person working miracles: he accepts to be acknowledged as the expected Messiah, the Son of God.
- Yet, he has still to convince his disciples about the true nature of his mission. He knows that the disciples and the crowds do not grasp that being the Messiah will entail suffering and death out of love.
- He then begins foretelling his Passion, his rejection by the leaders of the people, his Death and Resurrection.
- Peter and the other disciples cannot accept the idea of a "suffering Messiah".
- Jesus rebukes Peter: *"Get behind me, Satan"*. Peter plays Satan by suggesting that the Messiah should be the political liberator of popular expectations.
- Jesus instructs the disciples on the will of the Father about him and about his work of salvation. The Father certainly does not want the death of his Son. He only wants Jesus to bring justice and love to mankind, to reveal the true face of God, to reconcile men to God and to one another. This mission, however, will not be accomplished unless Jesus is ready to face and accept the death to which he will be put by those who do not understand the ways of God, by those who do not accept God as the loving and merciful Father of all.
- Since the moment of Jesus' death, there is neither love of God for us nor any love of ours for God or for one another unless it passes through "suffering". We, too, like the Apostles, are often tempted to escape from this will of God. Jesus, too, was tempted. But He overcame such a temptation. And, by overcoming it, he could be victorious over sin and death and open the doors of a new life for mankind, new perspectives and new horizons of hope and joy. It is not up to us to change the ways of God. We will be victorious over evil and death; that is, we will share in Christ's glory only if we now accept to the full our Christian vocation and are completely true to the mission entrusted to us by God for the salvation of mankind, no matter what the cost.

- God wants us to sow the seeds of justice and love, so that we may cooperate with Him in bringing about a universal brotherhood. But this mission sooner or later will be met with misunderstanding, indifference, opposition, and refusal, all of which will cause suffering to us.
- Let us ask Jesus, our Lord, to help us accept the sufferings connected with our Christian vocation, with courage and generosity, as He did. Jesus not only showed us the way, he is also walking with us, and giving us the light and strength we need to be his true disciples and witnesses in our daily lives.

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Eucharistic Celebrations:	
Sundays: 9.00 am (English) 7.45 am (Chinese) 10.30 am (Chinese)	
Anticipated Sunday Masses	
Saturdays: 6.00 pm (English) 7.30 pm (Chinese)	
Public holidays: 8.00 am (Chinese)	
Weekdays: 7.00 am (Chinese)	
Confessions:	
Sundays before Mass and during the 7.45 am Mass Weekdays on call	
Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament:	
Thursdays: 2.30 pm 1 st Thursday of the month: 8.00 pm	

Kids' Corner

Colour the picture below based on today's Gospel reading.



http://www.mscperu.org/grafic/graficoslit/bTO/24_to_b.htm