

This Week's Readings

First Reading: Jeremiah 20: 7-9.

Jeremiah, though persecuted for his prophetic work, cannot abandon it, because God's love burns too strongly in him.

Second reading: Romans 12: 1-2.

Paul exhorts us to worship with our entire beings, so that we can be transformed.

Gospel: Matthew 16: 21-27.

Jesus foretells his agony, death and resurrection and shows that suffering is part of a life spent for others.



Points for Reflection

In an interview with the Mexican newspaper *"Excelsior"*, in February 1980, Archbishop Oscar Romero said: "My life has been threatened many times...If they should go so far as to carry out their threat, I want you to know that I now offer my blood to God for justice and the resurrection of El Salvador." A month later, in the early evening of March 24, he was felled by an assassin's bullet while celebrating the Eucharist.

In **today's Gospel**, Jesus speaks for the first time of the suffering and death which await him in Jerusalem. He is well aware that some powerful persons---the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes---are threatened by his growing popularity among the Jews. Indeed, they are barely able to hide their hostility toward him. Knowing that he will be put to death in Jerusalem, why is he still going there?

It is important to remember that Jesus is going to Jerusalem not to die, but to make his "last call" to those who are still trapped in their unbelief. It is not his mission to die. His mission is to save and for that he is ready to die. He accepts his death willingly, because he sees in it the light of God's design. For him, death is a service, not an affliction.

Like Jesus, Archbishop Oscar Romero could have prevented his violent death by trying to please everyone. He could have turned a blind eye and a deaf ear on the suffering of his flock. He could have played mute and desisted from denouncing those responsible for their suffering. Instead, he courageously delivered his last and most eloquent sermon: his death. It was a sermon that continues to be heard throughout Latin America and beyond.

God sends his beloved Son to free us from our sufferings. In the process of liberating us, Jesus undergoes his passion and death. By not shrinking from his destiny, he teaches us to be ready to endure suffering, not for its sake, but as our free and joyful response to his call: *"Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me"*.

---From "365 Days with the Lord"
St Paul's Philippines, 2005

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Parish Priest: Fr Carlo Tei (E-mail: carlotei@i-cable.com; carlotei@gmail.com) Fr Sergio Ticozzi, Sr Mary Leung, Fr Raja (helping on Sundays)	Anticipated Sunday Masses Saturdays: 6.00 pm (English) 7.30 pm (Chinese) Public holidays: 8.00 am (Chinese) Weekdays: 7.00 am (Chinese)
Secretary: Miss Tse Choi Ping Office hours: Mon-Fridays: 9.00am – 1.00pm; 2.00pm – 5.30pm Sundays: 8.45am – 12 noon	Confessions: Sundays before Mass and during the 7.45 am Mass Weekdays on call
Parish Council Chairlady: Miss Candy Chan Tel: 23265322	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.

