

TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

September 20, 2009

Gospel: (Mark 9:30-37)

They came to Capernaum and, once inside the house, he began to ask them, “*What were you arguing about on the way?*” They remained silent. They had been discussing among themselves on the way who was the greatest. Then he sat down, called the Twelve, and said to them, “*If anyone wishes to be first, he shall be the last of all and the servant of all.*” Taking a child, he placed it in their midst, and putting his arms around it, he said to them, “*Whoever receives one child such as this in my name, receives me; and whoever receives me, receives not me but the One who sent me.*”

Reflection:

Jesus uses the model of a little child to illustrate his point. Children are innocent and without pretensions. They embody what “least of all” means. This also illustrates to what extent the disciple is to become the “servant of all” by receiving even the “least of all.” The total self-emptying that enables one to receive the “least of all” describes the disciple. This is how we receive Jesus—by receiving the least. No one is insignificant. (Living Liturgy, p.212)

Vincentian Meditation:

Are we really able to hear the cries of the poor, of the most oppressed: the women and children, who are often the poorest members of society; those discriminated against because of race, color, nationality, religion; the AIDS victims, who are often shunned by their families and by the physically healthy, those on the “edges of life,” the helpless infants and the helpless aged, who are unable to speak up themselves? Are we alert, “listening,” to the “signs of the times”: the increasing gap between the rich and the poor and the repeated call for justice made by the Church? (Maloney, *He Hears the Cry of the Poor*, p. 25-26)

Discussion: (*Share your thoughts after a moment of silence*)

In what ways are you challenged to be a “servant of all” by receiving the “least of all”...whose cries are the hardest to hear?

Closing Prayer:

Lord, set our hearts on fire with compassion for the “least of all,”

-so that we may suffer with those who suffer.

Lord, give us the grace to hear the cries of the poor,

-so that we may be a servant of the most oppressed.

Lord, help us to listen to the “signs of the times,”

-so that we may respond to the call for justice in our world.

Amen

