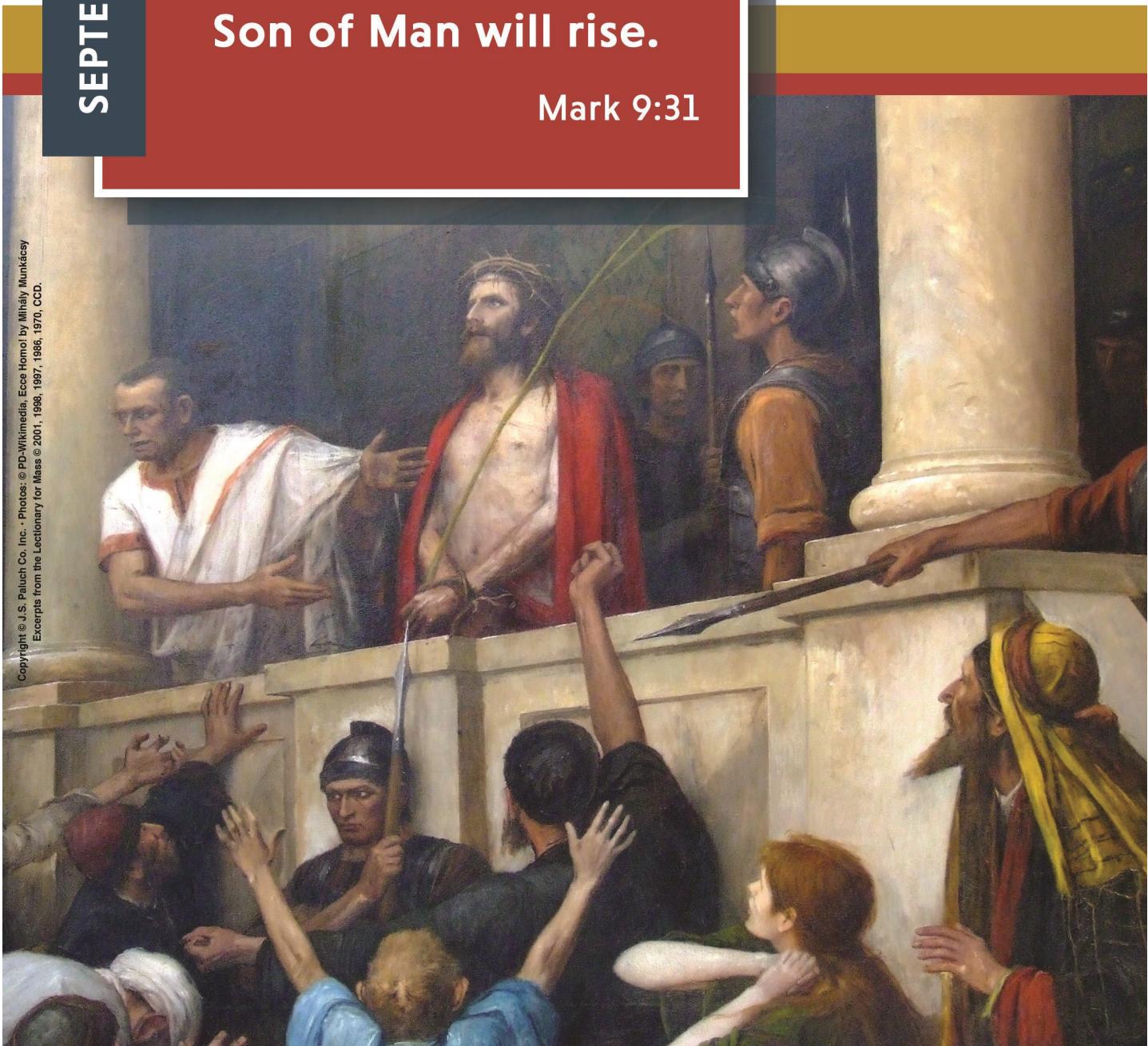


SEPTEMBER 19, 2021

**The Son of Man is to
be handed over to men
and they will kill him,
and three days
after his death the
Son of Man will rise.**

Mark 9:31

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TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Feast of Faith

Doxology and Amen

“Doxology” comes from a Greek word meaning “words of praise.” The Eucharistic Prayer ends with a doxology addressed to the triune God: “Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, almighty Father, for ever and ever.” It is an exclamation of praise, honor, and glory to God, reminding us that we receive everything from God through the Son, in the power of the Spirit. At the consecration, the priest held up the host and then the chalice for us to see and adore. During the doxology, the host and chalice are held up again, but this time they are held up and offered to God the Father. With the doxology, the Eucharistic Prayer ends, as it began, with words of praise addressed to the Father: truly, it is right and just to give God praise, and we assent to this in our whole-hearted acclamation, “Amen.” Never was more meaning packed into so short a word. This “Amen,” sometimes and fittingly called “the great Amen,” is our response to the entire Eucharistic Prayer.

—Corinna Laughlin, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.



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The Meaning of Discipleship

The geography of today’s Gospel is significant. Jesus is completing his ministry in Galilee and beginning his journey to Jerusalem, where he will meet both death and resurrection. The prediction of his death placed here is the second of three in Mark’s Gospel, and as usual it is the occasion for an important teaching on the part of Jesus. Today that lesson is tied to the need for his disciples to embrace a ministry of service. A play on words in Aramaic would have linked the words “child” and “servant,” thus turning Jesus’ gesture of placing a child in their midst into an illustration of his understanding of himself as the Servant of the Lord. It is that same awareness of the meaning of their ministry that Jesus (and Mark) wishes to instill in the disciples. Theirs must be a ministry of service if they are to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. And that service might even require of them that they be “handed over” to death. What would have been—in the culture of Jesus’ day—an ordinary discussion of social status (“who is the greatest”) becomes in Mark’s context a key insight into the meaning of discipleship for the disciples and for us.

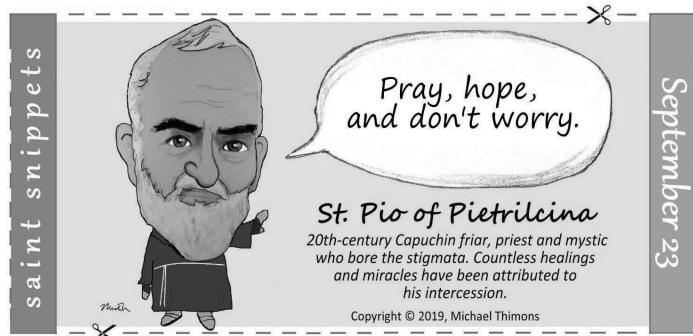
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Readings for the Week

Monday:	Ezr 1:1-6; Ps 126:1b-6; Lk 8:16-18
Tuesday:	Eph 4:1-7, 11-13; Ps 19:2-5; Mt 9:9-13
Wednesday:	Ezr 9:5-9; Tb:13:2, 3-4abefghn, 7-8; Lk 9:1-6
Thursday:	Hg 1:1-8; Ps 149:1b-6a, 9b; Lk 9:7-9
Friday:	Hg 2:1-9; Ps 43:1-4; Lk 9:18-22
Saturday:	Zec 2:5-9, 14-15a; Jer 31:10-12ab, 13; Lk 9:43b-45
Sunday:	Nm 11:25-29; Ps 19:8, 10, 12-14; Jas 5:1-6; Mk 9:38-43, 45, 47-48

Saints and Special Observances

Sunday:	Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time; Catechetical Sunday
Monday:	Ss. Andrew Kim Tae-gön, Paul Chöng Ha-sang, and Companions; Sukkot (Jewish harvest festival) begins at sunset
Tuesday:	St. Matthew
Wednesday:	Autumn begins
Thursday:	St. Pius of Pietrelcina (Padre Pio)
Saturday:	Blessed Virgin Mary



September 23

Today's Readings

First Reading — The wicked say: With revilement and torture let us put the just one to the test (Wisdom 2:12, 17-20).

Psalm — The Lord upholds my life (Psalm 54).

Second Reading — The wisdom from above is full of mercy and good fruits (James 3:16 — 4:3).

Gospel — Whoever receives one child such as this in my name, receives me (Mark 9:30-37).

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Twenty-fifth Sunday
In Ordinary Time
September 19, 2021

The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace
for those who cultivate peace.

—James 3:18

Treasures From Our Tradition

On the Byzantine calendar, September 23 is the feast of the Conception of John the Baptist. The Roman and Byzantine calendars have in common the other equinox- or solstice-derived dates of solemnities: December 25, March 25, and June 24. Scholars see strong evidence in the writings of the early Church Fathers for the fixing of these dates from the imagined “anniversary” of Gabriel’s appearance to Zechariah at Yom Kippur, which was thought to have coincided with the equinox as a day of “at-one-ment” between light and darkness. The spiritual writer Origen held to this date.

The annunciation to Zechariah then set the date six months later for Mary’s conception of Jesus (March 25), and then, of course, for the dates of the births of John (June 24) and Jesus (December 25). Is this “liturgical trivia?” Perhaps. But it’s also the best explanation we have for the dating of some of the most important festivals on our calendar. So even though the Roman Church doesn’t observe the Conception of John the Baptist, yesterday’s equinox can remind us of how our salvation history is closely attuned to God’s creation.

—James Field, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

What Makes You Happy?

St. James message of peace is as true now as it was two thousand years ago. Where else do wars and terrorism come from, than people holding on to wealth, power, or hatred? But the message James shares, and that of Jesus in the gospel, is a simple call to be different. Neither of them condemns anyone. They call us to look at what we really want and what truly brings happiness.

Jesus' disciples argued about who was greatest. Instead of slapping them down for their selfish pride, he looks at what they could be and calls them to a different attitude. To be truly happy, they must let go of pride and arrogance; they must learn that serving others is the only way to experience love and joy.

We are no different today. We have to learn that having the latest gadget, the most expensive cell-phone, or the latest-model car are at best temporary delights. And that being admired by acquaintances is never as lasting as loving someone for themselves. Jesus offers even more: the joy of being loved by God and helping others to know Him. Think about Jesus' words to the disciples: He is the Son of God, yet he wants to lead us not just to himself, but to the Father.

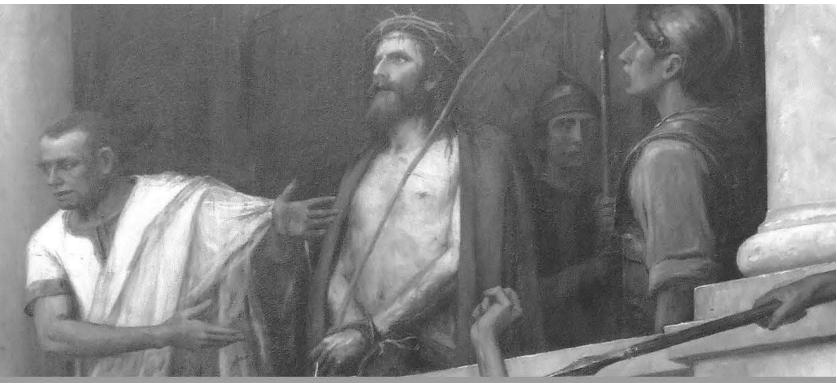
Can we learn to be more excited about what God has done for us than what we did to improve our home? Can we share our faith in God's mercy instead of bragging about our golf or bowling scores? Are we more interested in impressing members of the opposite sex, or treating all people with respect?

St. James ends our second reading with a challenging statement: He says we ask but don't receive because we ask wrongly. How often do we desire things that won't really make us happy? Do we pray for things we don't really need? Would we ask God to punish those who hurt us, or to help us forgive them? Let us ask God to show us his love and to help those around us to experience it too.

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SEPTEMBER 19, 2021

TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME



The Son of Man is to be handed over to men and they will kill him, and three days after his death the Son of Man will rise.

Mark 9:31

TWO PATHS

Today's first two readings present a striking contrast between two pathways in life. In Wisdom and the letter from James we are told of the path of the wicked, which leads to oppression and violence. We also hear of the path of the faithful, which leads to peace and human flourishing. Then our Gospel reading from Mark takes our reflection farther. The choice is shown to be not so simple or obvious. The path of faithfulness means following Jesus' lead, to expand our circle of care toward everyone, especially the most vulnerable. This path also includes opening ourselves to suffering and trials, as we face resistance from within and from outside us. The two paths essentially diverge over whether we refuse or accept God's love. Each day we face such choices as God invites us into the divine circle of care and enlists us to extend our own circle to those around us.

WHO IS HONORED

Today's Gospel passage has two parts: Jesus' announcement again of his coming suffering and death, and a scene with the disciples arguing about who is the "greatest." Mark places these scenes next to each other to emphasize the disciples' failure to understand. Their petty argument was the opposite of what Jesus had described as the way to follow him. The disciples were following the common understanding of group status: to honor the influential and those who seem to contribute the most. Jesus points to the opposite: he honors the vulnerable, the "least" in the community; in this case, a child. And he honors those who welcome the child.

Mark was addressing his own community in the early Church, who were seeking to learn how to live their faith. His questions may be important for us too. Who is honored in our faith community, and why? How do we honor those whom we set as examples? Who benefits from this different kind of "greatness"?

ASK THE HARD QUESTIONS

Twice in today's Gospel, Jesus' disciples are reduced to silence. First when Jesus describes his future suffering and death, and again when caught in their argument about who is the greatest. Perhaps they were afraid to really understand his teachings because of what it might cost them. Maybe they were afraid of being seen as ignorant by Jesus and especially by each other. What if they had dared to admit their confusion and ignorance and asked Jesus hard questions? Would Jesus have welcomed them?

Jesus presents a child who is to be welcomed and embraced. The child sets an example: it is the child who knows that he or she doesn't know. The child is free to ask "childlike" questions, and is open to answers. What if, in the intimacy of our prayer, we asked Jesus our own hard, embarrassing questions: about life, about ourselves and our relationships, about God? How might our relationship with God then change?

TODAY'S READINGS

Wisdom 2:12, 17–20
Psalm 54:3–4, 5, 6–8
James 3:16 — 4:3
Mark 9:30–37

Prayer of the Faithful

Let us seek wisdom from above, and pray for the needs of all.

**For our Church as we proclaim Christ crucified
and risen through our service to those who are lowest and least,
let us pray to the Lord.**

**For an end to all war and violence in the world,
starting with the policies of our own country,
let us pray to the Lord.**

**For children throughout the world, for their safety,
for enough food, for loving families,
let us pray to the Lord.**

**For all catechists and teachers of God's holy word,
for those who form our children, for those who work
with catechumens, for those who minister to young adults
And to the elderly,
let us pray to the Lord.**

**For our community as we set aside ambitions so
that we might serve those in need around us,
let us pray to the Lord.**

**For all those who are sick, for all who suffer from
COVID-19, and for all who have died,
especially N., N., and N.,
let us pray to the Lord.**

**For all the prayers that we hold in the silence of our hearts;
for all our intentions spoken and unspoken,
let us pray to the Lord.**

**Holy God,
you want us to love you
by loving the least among us.
Grant us the grace to serve one another.
We ask you to hear these our prayers
through Jesus Christ our Lord.**



Taking a child, Jesus set him before them, and taking him in his arms, he said to them, "Whoever receives one child like this in my name receives me; and whoever receives me does not receive me, but the One who sent me." Mk 9:36-37

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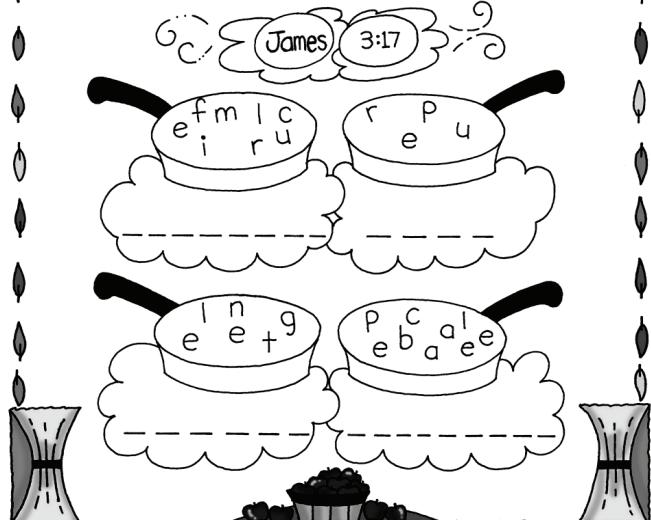
Mark 9 : 37

God's Word for Children



Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

The letters below have been scrambled in pans. Arrange them into words that describe God's wisdom. If you need help, read the scripture on the eggs.



BUT ONLY SAY THE WORD

Jesus met many people who were ill. These Bible passages are only a few of the accounts of Jesus' compassion for people who were suffering and how he healed them. Read these Gospel stories with an adult, and then decide how each picture represents a healing story.



Matthew 9:27-31



Mark 7:31-37

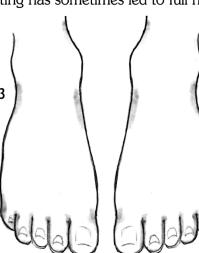
Jesus continues to heal us today in the sacrament of the anointing of the sick. Many parishes celebrate this sacrament with those who are ill at a special Mass on a Sunday during the year. The entire church, led by the priest, prays for God's grace and healing.

During the celebration of the sacrament, the priest lays his hands on the sick person, as Jesus did, or extends his hands over a group of people, and says a silent prayer. He also asks for the prayers of those who are gathered around the sick person. Then the priest anoints the person with the oil of the sick on the forehead and on the hands. Anointing expresses the Church's belief that God is watching over the one receiving the sacrament, and will give them strength and peace to deal with their illness. The anointing of the sick also assures those who are ill that the Church cares about them and will be praying for them. Anointing has sometimes led to full healing.



Luke 5:17-26

Matthew 12:9-13



The next time you are in church, ask an adult to help you find the three holy oils, and look for the oil of the sick that is used in this sacrament. The bottle might be inscribed with the initials "OS" (for "oil of the sick") or "OI" (for *oleum infirmorum*, the Latin words for "oil of the sick"). It is usually found in a place of honor with the other two holy oils, the oil of catechumens, used in baptism, and chrism, used in baptism, confirmation, and Holy Orders.



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