

September 27, 2015

26th Sunday in Ordinary time

Look within your heart to find the source of sin!

Numbers 11:25-29

Psalm 19:8, 10,12-14

James 5:1-6

Mark 9:38-43,45,47-48

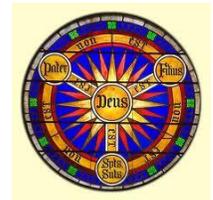
The Lord came down and spoke to Moses and then the Lord then put some of his spirit upon the seventy elders and they began to prophecy. Two men who were on the list but not in the camp at the time also received the spirit and likewise prophesied. Some of the Israelites complained to Moses about this and he asked them if they were jealous. For his part Moses would have liked all to receive the spirit and all to prophecy.

The psalmist describes the law of the Lord as perfect, trustworthy, and refreshing and says it gives wisdom to the simple. The ordinances are true, enduring and just. And while the psalmist is careful in keeping them he asks to be cleansed of his unknown faults for who can really know all their failings.

James warns the rich that they will wail over their impending miseries. Their wealth rots, their fancy clothes become moth-eaten, and their precious metals even corrode. All of this will be a testimony against them because they cheated the innocent and murdered the righteous.

John tells Jesus of some stranger using his name to drive out demons and heal the sick. "We tried to prevent him," he said. Jesus responded by saying not to prevent such as these for they are with him in a hidden way. Everyone who helps the followers of Christ will receive their just reward, while those who lead the innocent into sin will be punished severely.

The Blessed Trinity enlightens us
With awareness of our faults,
And strengthens us to root them out of our hearts and minds.



The disciples want to silence a man who is healing in Jesus' name because he is not one of their group. It is this same self-centered behavior evident in Joshua who accompanied Moses. He complained of the two men who received the spirit and prophesied since they didn't seem to be part of the "in group." The psalmist understands how difficult it is to detect our individual failings and so asks the Lord to cleanse him of his "unknown faults." James warns the rich who have profited unjustly as they will not escape stern judgment.

The readings concentrate on two opposites, one of withholding judgment, the other of giving it. The Israelites in Moses' community have judged two men wrongly and are reprimanded because they also convey an attitude of jealousy. Moses does not want to see God's gifts and graces rationed in any way and would like to have everyone in the community prophesy. In the Gospel the disciples also make judgments and try to stop someone from healing in Jesus' name. They too are corrected and become aware that there are those who follow Jesus and are unknown to them. The Psalmist recognizes that we are sometimes prone to misjudging situations and seeks forgiveness for the times he did not realize his mistakes.

James, on the other hand really castigates the wealthy that have abused the poor and caused much hardships on poor people. They seem not to want to become aware of their misdeeds as they value their wealth and riches beyond all else. Even stronger in judgment is Jesus' comment on those who lead the innocent into misdirected pathways.

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