

June 19, 2016 Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time  
**God is the strength of the people.**

Zechariah 12:10-11; 13:1

Psalms 63:2-6,8-9

Galatians 3:26-29

Luke 9:18-24

Zechariah prophesies a time when God will give grace and answer petitions in mercy. These words seek to enunciate the mystery of the divine passion, God's reaction toward the redemptive suffering of his chosen people and his only Son.

The psalmist recalls the Temple and expresses a strong desire to return. He looks for an encounter with God in the sanctuary and this will be a greater good than life itself. Help for the Psalmist comes from God alone and in faith he acknowledges this with great joy.

Paul explains that our union with Jesus Christ, the Son, comes through faith and baptism as the latter is the sacramental complement of faith. Secondary differences, he notes, vanish as Christians are incorporated into the Body of Christ through one Spirit.

Jesus asks the disciples, "Who do the people say I am?" It is Peter who answers, "You are God's Messiah," as he recognizes the fulfillment of the Old Testament hopes in Jesus. Jesus proceeds to apply the message of the cross to all Christians, those who would follow him. Shortly before this incident Jesus fed the thousands who followed him and now he establishes a connection between being fed, i.e., for us the Eucharist, and the carrying of the cross.

**The Father is the fount of eternal life,  
The Son is the source of Living Bread,  
The Holy Spirit, celestial flame, purifies all.**

We are reminded by the Psalmist to hold fast to our faith and while he looked forward to joyfully participating in the Temple prayers, we can likewise participate in our prayers at Mass. Zechariah points to the constant flow of graces and mercy we receive while Paul notes differences between us simply do not exist once we are a part of the Body of Christ. Jesus makes it clear: come follow me and receive the Eucharist from which you will receive graces as well as the strength to carry your own cross.

St. Thomas Aquinas notes that he has life everlasting who eats and drinks not only sacramentally, but also spiritually; that is by receiving not only the Sacrament but the very virtue of the Sacrament. For the worthy receiver is united by faith and charity to Christ who is contained in this Sacrament of the altar so that the communicant becomes transformed into Christ and becomes his member. For this divine food is not converted into the receiver, but it converts the receiver into Christ.

God of goodness, grant us to desire ardently,  
To seek wisely, To know surely,  
And to accomplish perfectly your holy will,  
For the glory of your name,  
And for building up the Kingdom.

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