

July 23, 2017

Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

In the first reading, we are reminded that God is all powerful, the master of all. God will attempt to redirect our behavior when we forget or ignore this fact. God is patient but there are limits to this patience. He judges our behavior with fairness. God allows us to acknowledge and repent for our sins. Because of his strength, he will forgive our sins. We are expected to follow his example of fairness, forgiveness and kindness.

The psalm sings praise to God for his patience, fairness, forgiveness and kindness. There is humility in the voice of the author and a plea for strength to follow God's ways.

The Old Testament writings lay the foundation for Christ's message in the New Testament. The ultimate act of self-sacrifice and forgiveness is demonstrated by Jesus in his life, death and resurrection.

The Holy Spirit descended upon the apostles after Christ's death and gave them strength. The Holy Spirit enabled the apostles to proclaim a new way, Christianity, the fulfillment of Jewish teachings. This message was not readily accepted by the Jewish people. The apostles needed the strength of the Holy Spirit to fulfill their mission. The second reading tells us the Holy Spirit will strengthen all of us.

The gospel parable stresses God's patience and ultimate justice. God sent his Son to us. Jesus educated his disciples on the ways of his Father. Jesus then "sowed" his disciples among all people to spread the good news of our salvation and God's love for us. The seeds of the good news spread and grew. We are reminded that in the end God will separate the followers from the disbelievers. His followers will be saved. The disbelievers will be discarded. Again, God's patience, just judgment and strength is proclaimed.

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