

Wisdom 2:12,17-20

Psalm 54

James 3:16-4:3

**Mark 9:30-37****Mark 9:30-37**

*After leaving the mountain Jesus and his disciples went from there and passed through Galilee. He did not want anyone to know it; for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, "The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and three days after being killed, he will rise again." But they did not understand what he was saying and were afraid to ask him.*

*Then they came to Capernaum; and when he was in the house he asked them, "What were you arguing about on the way?" But they were silent, for on the way they had argued with one another who was the greatest.*

*Jesus sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, "Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all."*

*Then he took a little child and put it among them; and taking it in his arms, he said to them, "Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me."*

In this particular section of Mark's Gospel  
we hear for the second time,  
Jesus predicting his approaching  
betrayal, suffering, death and resurrection.

The Apostles' response to this crucial message from Jesus  
was most discouraging.

Even though they had been with Jesus day-in and day-out  
for almost three years,  
and had received almost constant teaching,  
they missed the key point entirely.

A serious challenge to Jesus and his followers was imminent.  
It would soon disrupt their lives in a major way,

And that important message appears to just sail right over their heads.  
Or possibly they didn't want to even imagine that  
the Messiah himself would have to suffer such a fate.

Our powerful Redeemer, the Anointed One of God  
would suffer at the hands of earthly, evil people.

Our two most recent popes have made numerous comments  
about our Saviour and Lord being crucified on the Holy Cross,  
including these...

Pope Benedict said,

*"The "folly" of the Cross  
lies in the very fact that  
where there seems to be nothing but failure, sorrow and defeat,  
there is the full power of God's boundless love,  
for the Cross is an expression of love  
and love is the true power  
that is revealed precisely in this seeming weakness."*

29 October 2008

On the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, only 5 days ago,  
Pope Francis said,

*"...we too can fail to accept the message of the cross,  
that God saves us by allowing all the evil of our world  
to be unleashed upon himself.*

...

*How often do we long for a Christianity of winners,  
a triumphalist Christianity that is important and influential,  
that receives glory and honour?  
Yet a Christianity without a cross  
is a worldly Christianity,  
and shows itself to be fruitless."*

14 Sept. 2021

Through the crucifixion of Christ,  
through this immense act of love,  
the DARKNESS has been driven away,  
the devil has been wounded and death has been conquered.

Through his freely chosen death on a tree,  
God has brought forth the LIGHT.

The salvation of THE WHOLE WORLD has been accomplished.

Here is the closing verse from the hymn  
“O CROSS OF CHRIST, IMMORTAL TREE”

*Give glory to the risen Christ  
And to His Cross give praise,  
The sign of God's unfailing love,  
The hope of all our days.*

*The hope of all our days!*