

## **29<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

“Whoever wishes to be great among you will be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you will be the slave of all.” (Mark 10:43-44)

The aspiration to greatness, leadership lies deep in the human heart. As human beings we have the desire to put ourselves forward for leadership, offices of authority in our communities.

In today’s gospel reading, James and John expressed their desire to aspire to greatness. They requested the most honorable positions in Christ’s Kingdom. They declared that they would accept any difficulty in order to sit at Jesus’ right and left hands in his kingdom.

As we know sitting at a ruler’s right or left hand was a sign of power and prestige.

The other apostles became indignant at James and John for putting themselves forward for power and prestige, for positions of greatness in Christ’s kingdom.

This is where Jesus took up the question of what greatness truly is. According to Jesus, greatness does not lie in having the freedom to dictate to others. Greatness lies in service. The one who serves is the first: he is the one who is truly prominent because he gives himself to others.

To act in this way is to act in harmony with Jesus, for the son of man came not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.

This was the understanding of greatness, leadership which James and John and indeed the apostles did not possess.

Each and everyone of us has been given the gift of loving service in our families, our church, our communities, our workplaces, and country.

As Christians, our role in God's kingdom is to always serve God's people, in all places and in all situations. By our compassionate love, the poor, the sick and the needy will find wholeness and fulfillment in life.

It is said that life is created to be celebrated and its benefits shared. It is also said that one can fully live his or her dreams when he or she assists others to achieve theirs. Such kindness requires sacrifice, courage, and suffering.

Also let us remember that human ambition can destroy our Christian life but our humble service to others renders our Christian life fruitful. It is our humble service to others that makes us great in the sight of God.

At our just ended convocation the facilitator speaking about new evangelization stressed the fact that the church is not just an institution but also it is a communion of love. So, in our parishes as we encourage people to come to Mass, we must also encourage them to know each other, to build relationships and we are to accompany them on their faith journey. And we can do all these if we imitate Jesus in his humble, self-emptying love.

The second reading, the epistle to the Hebrews, urges us to be steadfast in our faith in spite the challenges we face on our faith journey. In all things let us approach the throne of grace of Jesus, our High Priest, to receive mercy and to find grace as we seek to serve others and reach out to those who do not have faith in God or are not active in the faith.