

The Second Sunday in ordinary Time.

Dear Friends,

A minister and lawyer were chatting at a party: "What do you do if you make a mistake on a case?" The minister asked. "Try to fix it if it's big; ignore it if it's insignificant," replied the lawyer. "What do you do?"

The minister replied "Oh, more or less the same. Let me give you an example. The other day I meant to say 'the devil is the father of liars,' but instead I said 'the devil is the father of lawyers', so I let it go."

Today we begin the ordinary season of the year. Today's readings tell us about the identity of Jesus, who He is and what His mission is. We need to know who Jesus is and understand His mission if we want to be His true disciples. A disciple is one who knows and understands the master and follows Him closely. Every good disciple is also an apostle who proclaims the good news of the master. In the Gospel, today we have John the Baptist fulfilling his role as a witness and proclaiming to people that Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. The lamb is the symbol of gentleness, sacrifice and triumph. Jesus is that gentle and humble person, who said that He is truly meek and of humble heart. The first reading connected with the Gospel of today tells us of the mysterious servant of God. God Himself has chosen Him from all eternity and has sent Him on a mission.

In today's Gospel, we have the first appearance of Jesus in public but He does not speak out His message. We see Him simultaneously in the role of Lord and Servant. The Gospels tell us that Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist at the river Jordan. As Jesus approached the place, John announced to some of his own disciples: "There is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world." However, the focus today is on John the Baptist and the revelation he provides about Jesus. John identifies Jesus as the Lamb of God, who has come to remove the sins of the world.

John the Baptist testimony seems not something a prophesy alone, rather he said that he had seen and testifies that he is the son of God. The Gospel writers wrote the Gospel with different events and miracles to prove that Jesus is the son of God. John the Baptist was asked a question who he was, because they expected a messiah would be coming for them. In his testimony he clarified that who he was and added about the servant messiah, who was even before him. John was very clear that he was not the messiah, pointed out the messiah to the disciples, and witnessed Him.

In his testimony John gave three titles of Jesus Christ. the first title he calls him the Greater One, the person who existed before him. The second title under which John saw Jesus can be called as the Vehicle of Holy Spirit. The Third title John calls Jesus as the Lamb of God.

In the second reading St. Paul identifies himself called by God in Jesus Christ to be holy. Today's readings tell us that if we want to be the disciples of Jesus we must first find out who He really is for us. The Lamb of God relates the human beings to god by sacrificing himself.

Today we hear titles given to Jesus, who is called the Son of God, the Lamb, and the true Servant who brings salvation to the whole world. His role is completely based on His relationship to God, whom He calls his Father. Our role is based on our relationship to Jesus, when we begin to know Him as He is and what He is called to do. Like Him, our tasks are to deepen our relationship continuously that leads us to know who we are and what we are called to do. That noble work is never finished. Through the centuries, human beings have looked at Jesus to see the kind and loving face of God. God the creator of the universe looks at Jesus his son with love and in Him we see that compassionate divine face. Today as we reflect on His word and discover him in this world, we need to know what His mission is, if we want to be His good disciples. Every disciple of Jesus is a true follower of the master. Also, an apostle who carries the good news to all!

One of the greatest violinists of all time was Niccolo Paganini. He was born in 1782 and he enjoyed a well-known and memorable career before his death in 1840. One day as Paganini was about to perform before a packed opera house, he suddenly discovered that he had walked out on stage with the wrong violin. What he was holding was not his valued instrument but one that belonged to someone else. His cherished violin was made by the master violin maker, Guarneri. Paganini was horrified and panic-stricken but knowing that he had no other choice, he began to play with all of the skill that he possessed. Everyone agreed, after the performance, that he had given a performance of a lifetime. When he finished his concert, the audience gave him a standing ovation. After the concert, in his dressing room, he was praised and commended for his marvelous performance, Paganini replied, " Today, I learned the most important lesson in my entire career. Before today, I thought the music was in my violin but today I learned that the music is in me."