

**29th SUNDAY YEAR B 2021.**

**AUTHORITY AND KINGDOM OF SERVICE!**

In the Old Testament the image of God is portrayed as **all powerful (Omnipotent), all present (Omnipresence) and all knowing (Omniscient)**. In the New Testament the picture is reversed. Jesus Christ the second person in the trinity presents himself with the authority of **service to others**. He is **Emmanuel, God with us, not a God in heaven and away from us, but among us in all the situations of our lives**.

He is like us in all things but sin. He understands all our struggles. He is the suffering servant in the book of Isaiah. He offered His life for the sins of His people. His death was the beginning of his **glorification and justification and the source of blessing for many**. This is the call of our first reading today.

In the second reading we see the high priest who can sympathize with us in our **trials and sufferings**. We can approach him with **trust and confidence as He knows our weaknesses and strengths because He is like us in all things but sin**.

In the Gospel the whole scenario takes another turn, thus putting the heavenly kingdom as a kingdom of **service, not modeled like an earthly kingdom** where the rulers **lord it over their subjects**. This heavenly kingdom is based on service to all. It is the service which makes one great. Jesus showed us an example by the fact that he came to **serve and not to be served** and to be a **ransom for many**. He is cautioning the two brothers John and James. They seem not to have understood Christ at all. They were still thinking of the earthly political kingdom. Obviously, this was causing friction, division, and envy among the other apostles.

The cup and baptism I will undertake, you will undertake. But as for the right and left assignment that is not within your powers neither mine. Obviously, the cup will be **bitter not sweet**. This is clearly seen when the time for him came to take the bitter cup. These characters escaped and left him alone. Sometimes we fall under the same category, we withdraw when life gets tough. We find what the cup holds for us on our journey here on earth and in the service of others and in discipleship of the gospel. Our prayer in those moments should be like His prayer, “**Father if this cup cannot pass without partaking of it may your will be done.**” We will need his support and encouragement to undertake this bitter cup in **service and sacrifice**.

-This is the call of the kingdom of love and service.

-This is the call of parents as they endure pain and suffering for their children as they grow.

-The call of the children as they take care of their aging parents.

-The call of political figures who suffer and even die for freedom and independence.

-The call of our military personnel serving and protecting their country and keeping peace in troubled parts of the world caused by power thirsty leaders.

-The call of doctors, nurses, care givers, and scientists giving service to the sick and distressed.

-The call of lawyers, attorneys, and judges giving just judgement in defending justice for all in this society.

-This is the call for all of us here and now to take the responsibility and stand for justice and truth at all costs. This is the cup we simply **must take**.

***Give your hands to serve and your heart to love (St. Mother Teresa)***