

22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time – 3rd September, 2023

Headings	Gospel (Matthew 16:21 - 27)	1 st Reading (Jeremiah 20:7 – 9)	2 nd Reading (Romans 12:1- 2)
Context	At this point in Matthew’s gospel Jesus begins to tell his disciples that he would suffer and die and rise from the dead. Peter objects but Jesus rebukes him. Jesus then points out that his followers will also suffer for his sake.	Jeremiah was a prophet at a time of political turmoil. He frequently rebuked the leaders and the people for ignoring God’s word. He suffered as a result and struggled with the call he received.	The final section of Romans begins at Chapter 12. It contains practical application of the teaching in earlier chapters. It gives instruction on areas such as worship and responsibility to civil government.
Key verse	“If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross and follow me”.	“Then there seemed to be a fire burning in my heart, imprisoned in my bones. The effort to restrain it wearied me. I could not bear it”.	“Do not model yourselves on the behaviour of the world around you, but let your behaviour change, modelled by your new mind”.
Key themes/ messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peter was naïve in thinking that Jesus should not have to suffer.. • Jesus teaches clearly that suffering and self-denial are central to the Christian life. • Followers of Jesus have a choice to make – follow Jesus or the way of the world. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jeremiah’s experiences prefigured the experiences of Jesus. • Jeremiah loved his people in spite of their sins and prayed for them. • Jeremiah was passionate about God’s word and could not avoid speaking it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old Testament sacrifices involved killing of animals. Paul is asking for different sacrifices – not killing our bodies but putting to death what is sinful. • Christians must allow God to transform them to images of Christ.
Questions/ application to our lives	In what ways has your commitment to Jesus and his Church entailed a denial of yourself? Jesus told his disciples (on the road to Emmaus) that it was necessary that the Messiah should suffer. How would you explain to an unbeliever why it was necessary?	God’s word was alive for Jeremiah. How does God’s word come alive for you? How do you react when you become aware of the sins/faults of others? Do you judge or condemn them or pray for them?	Paul contrasts true worship with idolatry. Can you mention examples of idolatry today? In what ways do you ”conform” to the standards (social, economic, political) of the world? What steps can you take to be “transformed by the renewal of your mind”?
Further reading	Catechism 363, 554, 618, 736, 2232	Catechism 2584	Catechism 1454, 1971, 2031, 2520, 2826

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