



25th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Wisdom 2:12, 17-20
Ps 54:3-6, 8
James 3:16--4:3
Mark 9:30-37

Monday Sept. 21 St. Matthew

Eph 4:1-7, 11-13
Ps 19:2-5
Matt 9:9-13

Tuesday Sept. 22

Ez 6:7-8, 12b, 14-20
Ps 122:1-5
Luke 8:19-21

Wednesday Sept. 23

Ezek 9:5-9
Tobit 13:2-4, 7-8
Luke 9:1-6

Thursday Sept. 24

Haggai 1:1-8
Ps 149:1b-6a, 9b
Luke 9:7-9

Friday Sept. 25

Haggai 2:1-9
Ps 43:1-4
Luke 9:18-22

Saturday Sept. 26

Zec 2:5-9, 14-15a
Jer 31:10-13
Luke 9:43b-45

In this Sunday's readings, we face wickedness: jealousy destroying the good, selfishness causing harm to others, and pride squashing those who get in the way.

The first scripture covers the evil doings of outsiders who oppressed the Israelite nation. In the Gospel reading, Jesus predicts the visitation of spiritual outsiders who were fighting against his ministry. The letter of James addresses the worst wickedness of all: the battle within the parish – Christians against Christians.

Jealousy and selfish passions are usually the root beneath every scandal in the Church, every division on the parish staff, every discord among ministries, every disappointed volunteer who feels pushed out, every broken relationship in Christian families, and every attitude that chases weaker Catholics

away from the faith – it's all wicked!

To get at the root of any divisive problem, look for self-centered ambition. Honestly and objectively identify even the most subtle forms of it. When you see it in others, do you feel sorrow for them? If not, why not? The answer to that probably lies in your own self-centered pride.

Jesus provided the cure for this: "If anyone wishes to be first" (which is a desire motivated by selfish ambition) "you must become the servant of all."

Selfish ambition tries to grab success away from others. James pointed out that whatever we're ambitious for, if it's good, we can have simply by asking God for it and working in collaboration with the Holy Spirit to achieve our goals – but not if we want it only to satisfy our personal, selfish passions.

God gives us what we pray for when it will benefit the parish community or the entire family or those we are



called to serve in our ministries. When we desire something for the sake of how it will help others (rather than just for our own benefit), this desire

is pure, peaceable, gentle, compliant, and full of mercy and will produce good fruits.

Reflect & Discuss:

1. When have you suffered from the jealousies and selfish ambitions of others in the Church?
2. How did this affect your faith?
3. Did it motivate you to avoid committing the same sin?
4. Identify how jealousy and selfish ambition have been the underlying cause behind one problem you've witnessed or experienced. What does your story teach about how to deal with such scandals with a pure heart, a peaceful response, gentleness, mercy, and good fruits that turn a tragedy into a triumph?