

## Yr C 12th Sunday in Ordinary Time



Luke 9:18-24

**18** One day when Jesus was praying alone in the presence of his disciples he put this question to them, 'Who do the crowds say I am?' **19** And they answered, 'John the Baptist; others Elijah; and others say one of the ancient prophets come back to life.' **20** 'But you,' he said, 'who do you say I am?' It was Peter who spoke up. 'The Christ of God,' he said. **21** But he gave them strict orders not to tell anyone anything about this. **22** 'The Son of Man,' he said, 'is destined to suffer, grievously, to be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes and to be put to death, and to be raised up on the third day.' **23** Then to all he said, 'If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross every day and follow me. **24** For anyone who wants to save his life will lose it; but anyone who loses his life for my sake, that man will save it.'

Other readings: Zechariah 12:10-11; 13:1 Psalm 62 (63) Galatians 3:26-29

This reading will sound very familiar. The account of Peter's profession of faith is central to the three synoptic gospels, Matthew, Mark and Luke. Each evangelist presents this story in a way that fits in with his own way of narrating the gospel. Luke reserves ten chapters of his gospel for the journey of Jesus from Galilee to Jerusalem. Later in chapter 9, from which today's gospel is taken, Jesus will set out on the road to Jerusalem, his journey to the cross and resurrection. Before this Jesus questions his disciples on their understanding of his mission, and gives his first warning to them that he is destined to suffer and die. Peter's profession of faith in Jesus as the Messiah, the Christ, is told with great simplicity. As in the Gospel of Mark, Jesus' response is to command silence about his role. Jesus is unwilling to be drawn into popularity as the leader of a freedom movement. There is furthermore no commendation of Peter for his faith in Jesus, as appears when Matthew tells this story. Luke has other things to emphasise. Jesus is called to give his life for others. This will be his path to new life. This path is to be followed not only by the disciples but by 'all'. For all of us the path to life will be marked by suffering, but Jesus has gone this way before us and he will bring us to the life of the resurrection. The scene is now set for Jesus to begin his journey to Jerusalem.

*Who do you say Christ is?*

*Is it really possible to consider suffering as a gift?*

*Let us pray for those whose sufferings seem too hard to bear.*

*Let us pray for those who seek to alleviate the pain of others, whether physical or mental.*