

- The Gospel says today that Jesus was “*resolutely determined to journey to Jerusalem*”, even though he knew exactly what was going to happen to him—to be betrayed, denied, abandoned...spit upon, beaten, whipped, and crucified...this “passion” He would suffer because of His “passion” for souls. For us. For each of us. Individually.
- The first event is the Samaritans’ rejection—not realizing who He truly is. The Samaritans, who were of mixed Jew and Gentile origin—worshiped God at Mt. Gerizim rather than at the temple in Jerusalem.
- We can see in the Samaritans those around us who reject Christ--friends, family and neighbors—and, at times, even ourselves.
- Why reject Christ? Because they, too, do not recognize that His sacrifice is for them...a sacrifice without which no one would come to the salvation now so freely offered to us.
- Jesus, though man, is also God...and sees every action of our lives—good or bad...charitable or not...and if strict merciless justice were God’s rule, then we might rightfully deserve to have the angels and saints recommend as the apostles did with the Samaritans: “*Shall we call down fire from Heaven to consume them?*”
- But Jesus rebukes the apostles for that. He says, “No”...
- ...for He does not reject unbelievers or those who stray, but with God’s love and patience, allows for repentance...allows for the realization of His truth.
- He says in the Gospel of John: “*I did not come to judge the world but to save the world.*” (John 12:47 RSV)...and the Gospel of Matthew tells us: “*He will not break a bruised reed or quench a smoldering wick.*” He will not condemn even those whose faith is weak or hanging by a thread...in order to give them time to come to him.
- ...and when they do repent, He is quick to receive them.

- Pope Francis has declared the current time as the Year of Mercy... but we open the conduit of mercy only through repentance and conversion from doing the wrong to doing what is right— following God’s truth given in Jesus Christ...loving God in obedience, loving our neighbor in charity.
- As He tells us through Isaiah: "*Come now, let us reason together, says the LORD: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool.*" (Isa 1:18 RSV)
- We know how enticing are the temptations of the world, and who among us has not fallen through weakness?
- ...and so we cannot know the hearts or history (or future) or aptitude of sinners and unbelievers, and thus cannot judge them.
- We simply must hope and pray that they (and we) choose to accept God’s grace and will turn (or return) them to the path of Christ... never asking God’s condemnation for them, but for the realization of God’s goodness and truth and love.
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- Still groping through the fog of the world, many, if not all of us, are swayed by the quick but empty things that the world provides.
- The constant messages: “Greed is good!” “Just click this link for a great time!” “Indulge yourself—you deserve it.”
- In many cases, those who don’t acknowledge Christ have either never been taught the way of Christ, or they’ve been taught poorly.
- If a person grew up rarely or never hearing the principles of the Gospel--the only place they’d get their values is from the world... and so can he be blamed for accepting the values of the world... thinking that sex, drugs & rock ‘n’ roll are the ways to happiness.
- God does write the basics of morality—natural law—upon our hearts, yes...but we’re constantly having to swim upstream against a rapid current...and when conscience wearies, it’s so much easier to swim downstream with the world and ignore the fact that you’re being swept out to be lost at sea.

- Is it any wonder there is so much despair and depression, for if this is all there is, what's the point?
- And yet...to our last breath, God is ready to receive us home. But the quicker we follow Christ, the greater our joy becomes.

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- Now, in our Gospel today...farther down the road three men come to Jesus saying they want to follow him...but with conditions.
 - But we can't follow God "by condition".
 - Jesus says, "...*the Son of Man has nowhere to rest his head*"... thereby warning ALL his potential followers of what may be expected in following him—not an easy life, but eternal life. A constant giving of oneself to God and to others.
 - The other two men tell him: "I'll follow you, BUT...; I'll be with you, BUT..."
 - Jesus is not so much telling these two men not to care for their relatives as to relate that the call of God is an "all in" proposition...not one of continually longing for what we leave behind.
 - Imagine getting married, and yet your spouse keeps a picture of an old sweetheart on his/her bedside.
 - The call of Christ cannot wait, and we must always strive to make our fidelity to Him total.
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 - Christ always...first in our hearts...before friends, before family... for family and friends are mere sips from the stream of love, but Christ is the very source.
 - But thank God in His mercy that He does not subject most of us (at least yet) to such trials...for some are put that test.
 - I've known several seminarians and priests disowned by family and friends for following Christ in the Catholic faith.
 - We had a 20-year-old Chinese seminarian who would be imprisoned if he returned home—and yet he chose exile from home, family and friends for the rest of his life in order to become a priest for Christ.

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- Christ's call is a gift beyond all gold and silver or any earthly happiness...because all else passes away, but Heaven cannot pass away.
- So let us not be not like St. Augustine before his conversion in that, while he was yet living with his mistress and struggling with chastity, prayed: "*Lord, make me chaste. But not yet!*"
- But what a great peace and joy came to him when he finally surrendered totally to Christ...for with Augustine's (and every saint's) conversion—including ours—comes great peace, and a love beyond that ever previously known...totally eclipsing the ephemeral earthly sensual pleasures theretofore experienced.
- Then, after being steadfast in that surrender to Christ...when body fails, and the prospect of death and judgment envelopes us, we may hear those words calling through the mist:... "*Well done, good and faithful servant. Come enter your master's joy.*"

Reading I [1 Kgs 19:16b, 19-21](#)

The LORD said to Elijah:

“You shall anoint Elisha, son of Shaphat of Abelmeholah,
as prophet to succeed you.”

Elijah set out and came upon Elisha, son of Shaphat,
as he was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen;
he was following the twelfth.

Elijah went over to him and threw his cloak over him.

Elisha left the oxen, ran after Elijah, and said,

“Please, let me kiss my father and mother goodbye,
and I will follow you.”

Elijah answered, “Go back!

Have I done anything to you?”

Elisha left him, and taking the yoke of oxen, slaughtered them;

he used the plowing equipment for fuel to boil their flesh,

and gave it to his people to eat.

Then Elisha left and followed Elijah as his attendant. Continuing your session...

Responsorial Psalm [Ps 16:1-2, 5, 7-8, 9-10, 11](#)

R. (cf. 5a) You are my inheritance, O Lord.

Keep me, O God, for in you I take refuge;

I say to the LORD, “My Lord are you.

O LORD, my allotted portion and my cup,

you it is who hold fast my lot.”

R. You are my inheritance, O Lord.

I bless the LORD who counsels me;

even in the night my heart exhorts me.

I set the LORD ever before me;

with him at my right hand I shall not be disturbed.

R. You are my inheritance, O Lord.

Therefore my heart is glad and my soul rejoices,

my body, too, abides in confidence

because you will not abandon my soul to the netherworld,

nor will you suffer your faithful one to undergo corruption.

R. You are my inheritance, O Lord.

You will show me the path to life,

fullness of joys in your presence,

the delights at your right hand forever.

R. You are my inheritance, O Lord.

Reading II [Gal 5:1, 13-18](#)

Brothers and sisters:

For freedom Christ set us free;

so stand firm and do not submit again to the yoke of slavery.

For you were called for freedom, brothers and sisters.

But do not use this freedom

as an opportunity for the flesh;

rather, serve one another through love.

For the whole law is fulfilled in one statement,

namely, You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

But if you go on biting and devouring one another,

beware that you are not consumed by one another.

I say, then: live by the Spirit

and you will certainly not gratify the desire of the flesh.

For the flesh has desires against the Spirit,

and the Spirit against the flesh;

these are opposed to each other,

so that you may not do what you want.

But if you are guided by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

Gospel [Lk 9:51-62](#)

When the days for Jesus' being taken up were fulfilled,

he resolutely determined to journey to Jerusalem,

and he sent messengers ahead of him.

Continuing your session...
ad of him.

On the way they entered a Samaritan village

to prepare for his reception there,

but they would not welcome him

because the destination of his journey was Jerusalem.

When the disciples James and John saw this they asked,

“Lord, do you want us to call down fire from heaven
to consume them?”

Jesus turned and rebuked them, and they journeyed to another village.

As they were proceeding on their journey someone said to him,

“I will follow you wherever you go.”

Jesus answered him,

“Foxes have dens and birds of the sky have nests,

but the Son of Man has nowhere to rest his head.”

And to another he said, “Follow me.”

But he replied, “Lord, let me go first and bury my father.”

But he answered him, “Let the dead bury their dead.

But you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God.”

And another said, “I will follow you, Lord,

but first let me say farewell to my family at home.”

To him Jesus said, “No one who sets a hand to the plow

and looks to what was left behind is fit for the kingdom of God.”