

Twenty Second Sunday in Ordinary Time – Year A (Mt 16: 21-27)

29th & 30th of August 2026

Dear friends,

In today's Gospel, Jesus drops a bombshell. He tells His disciples that He must suffer and die. Peter is shocked. He speaks to Jesus alone and says, "God forbid, Lord! This must never happen to you." But Jesus corrects him sharply. Then, Jesus tells them all: "Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me."

This connects beautifully to our First Reading of Jeremiah. Jeremiah complained to God because preaching the truth brought him nothing but mockery and pain. He wanted to quit. He said, "I will not mention him, I will not speak in his name anymore." But then Jeremiah felt God's word inside him like a burning fire shut up in his bones. He could not hold it in. He had to keep going.

There is an old story about a man who thought his personal cross was far too heavy. He complained to God, asking for a lighter one. In a dream, God led him to a large room filled with crosses of all shapes and sizes. The man happily put down his heavy wooden cross and started trying others. A golden cross looked beautiful, but it cut painfully into his shoulders. A cross covered in roses looked nice, but hidden thorns pierced his skin. Finally, in a corner, he found a modest, plain cross. He tried it on, and it fit perfectly. When he looked closely, he realized it was the exact same cross he had been carrying the whole time.

Jesus reminds our parish family today that we cannot reach heaven by taking the easy way out. Carrying our cross means choosing love, patience, and honesty even when it is very hard. Like Jeremiah, we might sometimes want to give up when life gets tough. But God gives us that same inner fire to keep going. We take up our cross every time we forgive someone who hurt us, stand up for what is right, or care for a sick person. Let us stop chasing comfort and start chasing Christ, because true life is found when we lose our selfishness for His sake.

Let us pray

Lord Jesus, give our parish family the fire of Jeremiah and the courage of the saints. Help us to embrace our daily crosses without complaint, to drop our selfish desires, and to find our true joy in following You. Amen.