

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
13th September 2009

First Reading

Isa. 50:4-9a

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah

I gave my body to those who struck me.

The Lord God has given me the tongue of a teacher, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word. Morning by morning he wakens— wakens my ear to listen as those who are taught. The Lord God has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I did not turn backward. I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I did not hide my face from insult and spitting. The Lord God helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame; he who vindicates me is near. Who will contend with me? Let us stand up together. Who are my adversaries? Let them confront me. It is the Lord God who helps me; who will declare me guilty?

This is the word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 116

Response: *I will walk in the presence of the Lord,
in the land of the living.*

1. I love the Lord for he has heard
the cry of my appeal;
for he turned his ear to me
in the day when I called him. **R.** I was helpless so he saved me. **R.**

2. They surrounded me, the snares of
death,
with the anguish of the tomb;
they caught me, sorrow and distress.
I called on the Lord's name.
O Lord my God, deliver me! **R.**

3. How gracious is the Lord, and just;
our God has compassion.
The Lord protects the simple hearts;
I will walk in the presence of the Lord
in the land of the living. **R.**

4. He has kept my soul from death,
my eyes from tears
and my feet from stumbling.
I will walk in the presence of the Lord
in the land of the living. **R.**

Second Reading

Jas 2:14-26

A reading from the letter of James

Faith without good works is dead.

What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill," and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.

But someone will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith apart from your works, and I by my works will show you my faith. You believe

that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder. Do you want to be shown, you senseless person, that faith apart from works is barren? Was not our ancestor Abraham justified by works when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was brought to completion by the works. Thus the scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness," and he was called the friend of God. You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone. Likewise, was not Rahab the prostitute also justified by works when she welcomed the messengers and sent them out by another road? For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is also dead.

This is the word of the Lord.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia! Alleluia! My only glory is the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, which crucifies the world to me, and me to the world. **Alleluia!**

GOSPEL

Mk 8:27-38

✠ A reading from the holy gospel according to Mark

You are the Christ . . . the Son of Man was destined to suffer much.

Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that I am?"

And they answered him, "John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets."

He asked them, "But who do you say that I am?"

Peter answered him, "You are the Messiah." And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him.

Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it."

For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

This is the gospel of the Lord.

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Printed at the Anglican Benedictine Abbey, Camperdown. 3260. www.benedictineabbey.com.au