

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 September 20
**Sts. Andrew Kim Tae-gön,
Paul Chông Ha-sang, & Co**
Ezra 1:1-6
Ps 126:1b-6
Luke 8:16-18

Tuesday September 21
St. Matthew
Ephesians 4:1-7,11-13
Ps 19:2-5
Matthew 9:9-13

Wednesday September 22
Ezra 9:5-9
Tobit 13:2-4,7-8
Luke 9:1-6

Thursday September 23
St. Pio of Pietrelcina
Haggai 1:1-8
Ps 149:1b-6a,9b
Luke 9:7-9

Friday September 24
Haggai 2:1-9
Ps 43:1-4
Luke 9:18-22

Saturday September 25
Zechariah 2:5-9,14-15a
Jer 31:10-13
Luke 9:43b-45

In this Sunday's readings, we face wickedness: jealousy destroying what's 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 evil doings of spiritual outsiders who were fighting against his ministry. The letter of James addresses the worst wickedness of all: the battle within the Church – Christians against Christians.

Jealousy and selfishness 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 so that you can also identify God's antidote. When you see divisiveness in others, do you feel sorrow for them? If not, why not? The answer to that usually lies in our own self-centered pride.

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

Selfish ambition is sinful because it tries to grab success away from others. James pointed out that whatever we're ambitious for, if it's

good, we can have it 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.

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?