

# **Fourteenth Sunday of Ordinary Time, Cycle A**

Sunday, July 9, 2017

## **First Reading**

Zechariah 9:9-10

The Lord shall come to reign in Zion.

## **Responsorial Psalm**

Psalm 145:1-2,8-11,13-14

A prayer of praise to God who is our king.

## **Second Reading**

Romans 8:9,11-13

Those in whom the Spirit of God dwells must now live according to the Spirit, not the flesh.

## **Gospel Reading**

Matthew 11:25-30

Jesus prays in thanks to God, who has revealed himself to the lowly.

## **Background on the Gospel Reading**

Today's reading from Matthew's Gospel comes after a discourse in which Jesus reproaches people who have witnessed his mighty deeds yet still lack belief. In this context, today's Gospel explains the reason for this unbelief and reveals what is necessary for faith. Today's Gospel also continues to enhance our understanding of discipleship as last week's Gospel did.

Jesus first prays in thanksgiving to God who has made himself known to Jesus' disciples. He praises God who has made himself known to the "little ones" and not to the wise and learned. As in other recent readings from Matthew's Gospel, a contrast is made here between the unbelieving Pharisees, who are wise and learned, and the faithful disciples, tax collectors, and sinners with whom Jesus keeps company.

The second part of this reading calls to our attention the unity between the Father and the Son. God has made himself known through Jesus, and in knowing Jesus, we come to know the Father. In Jesus' life and in his person, God reveals himself to us.

In the concluding sentences of today's Gospel, Jesus' teaching is again contrasted to the teaching of the Pharisees. This common theme of Matthew's Gospel probably reflects tension that existed between Jesus and the Pharisees and between the Pharisees and the community of Christians for whom Matthew wrote. Pharisaic Judaism became the predominant form of Judaism after the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem about 70 A.D. Here that tension is expressed as alternative paths of holiness. The careful observance of the Mosaic law taught by the Pharisees could be experienced by some as difficult and burdensome. In contrast, Jesus' way of holiness is presented as uncomplicated and even restful.

## **Family Connection**

In today's Gospel, Jesus teaches an important lesson for families: from the youngest and simplest among us we can learn the most profound insights about God. Parents who are attentive to this reality can learn much from their children even as their children are learning from them. Families who create time and space for encounters with God will enrich the faith of all who share in family life.

Gather as a family and read together today's Gospel, Matthew 11:25-30. Allow time for each person to reflect on what Jesus reveals to us about God. Invite each person to show these things in a creative way, perhaps through a picture, poem, or some other means. Share these with one another. Conclude in prayer together, thanking Jesus for making God known to us. Pray together the Lord's Prayer or today's Psalm, Psalm 145.