

Commentary on the Gospel for Sat, Jul 20th 2024

Self-emptying act of the Cross

How do we achieve success and victory in our lives? In everyone's life, there are key moments or turning points on which their life hinges.

Today's Gospel depicts Jesus as a healer who prefers to work in silence, resembling Isaiah's servant of the Lord. Without drawing attention to himself, he quietly fulfils his mission of delivering a message of salvation to the ailing. He brings healing to the sick, yet he aims to steer clear of any undesired attention. Despite his efforts, there are instances where avoiding recognition was impossible. But, pursuing accolades and seeking self-promotion are contrary to the values of the Lord.

The mounting confrontation between the Pharisees and Jesus was a decisive moment of crisis. The religious leaders were driven by their prejudice against Jesus, and therefore, they conspired not simply to oppose Jesus but to eliminate him.

Jesus uses this crisis to teach his disciples an important lesson: the only way to glory in God's kingdom is through the cross. Matthew quotes from the "Suffering Servant" prophecies of Isaiah to explain how Jesus the Messiah would accomplish his mission - not through crushing power - but through love and sacrificial service (Isaiah 42:1-4)

We are called to take up our cross every day – the cross of love, compassion and mercy. Loving others is not always easy; instead, it can be painful. Mercy and compassion, generated from genuine love and affection for those around is our cross that we must carry as we follow the Lord.

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