

## REFLECTION FOR THE 7<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

This Sunday's liturgy challenges us to put aside our old logic of retribution: “*an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth*” and replace it with the logic of love. Only in this way will we truly be children of our Father in heaven, who rains on the just and the unjust alike.

The first reading presents David as a man with a magnanimous heart. Having the chance to eliminate Saul, he does not listen to what Abishai, who was with him, tells him to do: take the life of Saul, the enemy who was pursuing him to kill him. Abisha is still in the mindset of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, whereas David decides not to raise his hand against the “Lord's anointed.” David believed that life belongs to God and that only God has the right to take someone's life. That is why he let Saul go without harming him, but from afar he questioned Saul, saying: “*The Lord rewards every man for his righteousness and faithfulness, for the LORD gave you into my hand today. and I would not put out my hand against the LORD's anointed.*”

We respond to this reading with the Responsorial Psalm, singing: “*The LORD is compassionate and gracious. The Lord is slow to anger and rich in mercy. He does not treat us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our faults.*” Just as the Lord has compassion on us and forgives us our sins, we too must choose the path of forgiveness and mercy, as disciples of the Lord and believers in the God of compassion and peace.

In the Gospel, Jesus defines the fundamental features of the identity of a true disciple. According to Jesus, “love” - gratuitous, unconditional, unlimited, boundless love - is at the heart of this identity. The great reason why Jesus invites his disciples to forgive, to love their enemies, to pray for the violent and the wicked, is that they are children of a God who is love. Jesus tells us: “*But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. Be merciful, as your Father is merciful.*”

The children of God are called to show the world God's goodness, tenderness, and mercy through their way of living and loving. God is the reference point for our lives. Just as he loves everyone, good and bad, because they are all his children and he wants to welcome them all into his Kingdom, we too must live our lives in the ways of peace and justice, of mercy and compassion, of love. Only in this way will we truly be disciples of Jesus.

In the second reading, we continue reading St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians. In today's passage, Paul contrasts Christ with Adam. Adam is the model of earthly man, with his frailty, his sin; Christ is the model of heavenly man, with his mercy, goodness, forgiveness. Paul invites us to imitate Jesus Christ, to have him as a model in our lives, so that we too can become heavenly men, capable of living God's love in our lives, as Christ did, who did not make use of his equality with God, but chose a life of total love until he gave his life for us on the cross.

May our lives be marked by total love for God and our brothers and sisters, as Jesus Christ teaches us in his Gospel and with his life.

Amen.