



Society of African Missions

“The Mission”

23 Bliss Avenue
 Tenafly, NJ 07670
 Phone: 201-567-0450
 Visit our website
www.smafathers.org



Mass Schedule

Sundays

10:00 am; 12 noon

Weekdays & Holy Days

9:30 am & 11:45 am

Confessions Saturdays:

After 11:45am Mass.

Or by appointment.

Contact Fr. James McConnell

201-567-0450 Ext. 242

Bereavement & Visit to the Sick

Contact Fr. Austin Ochu

201-567-0450 Ext. 225

Perpetual Mass Association

Office open Monday-Friday
 from 9:30am to 3:00pm

S.M.A. Vocation Office

Fr Dermot Roache, SMA

Director

201-567-0450 Ext. 253

S.M.A. Museum

Open Monday-Sunday from
 9:00am –5:00pm

Contact Fr. James McConnell

201-567-0450 Ext. 242

Sunday Collection: \$860

Thank you for your support.

Please remember to support
 your local parishes.

Administration:

Fr Ranees A. Rayappan, SMA

Provincial Superior

Fr Austin Ochu, SMA

House Superior

TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
Masses for the week of SEPTEMBER 22, 2024 – SEPTEMBER 28, 2024

Date	Time	Intention	Requested by:
Sun.-Sat.	8:00	Liv. & Dec. Benefactors of the SMA	
Sun. Sept. 22	10:00	Fr Noel Morales Gomez+ Arcenia Padaloy+	
	12:00	Dadoo Chung+	John Chung
Mon. Sept. 23	9:30	Angelica Fernandez+	Daughters
	11:45	William Cole Hackman (Liv.)	Joseph & Noreen Hackman
Tue. Sept. 24	9:30	Desrochers Family (Liv. & Dec.)	
	11:45	Cesar Estrellado+	Josie Martinez
Wed. Sept. 25	9:30	Jonas Tolentino+	Erly Cortez
	11:45	Roderick R. Macadaeg+	Josie Martinez
Thurs. Sept. 26	9:30	Leticia Ricafrente Lawler+	John Lawler
	11:45	George T. Neill (Happy Birthday)	
Fri. Sept. 27	9:30	Paradis Family (Liv. & Dec.)	
	11:45	Felix Labay+	Family
Sat. Sept. 28	9:30	Peter & Denise Hickey+	Angela & Family
	11:45	Paul DiPaolo	Martha DiPaolo

Today’s Readings: *First Reading: Wisdom 2:12. 17-20*

People whose intentions are not good will put good people to the test.

Second Reading: James 3:16 – 4:3

But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.

Gospel: Mark 9:30-37

Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant of all.

Sunday Volunteers needed.- Do you enjoy singing? If yes, please contact Fr Austin Ochu at 201-567-0450 Ext 225

“Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant of all.”

Illustration

“More haste, less speed.” How often have you used this proverb which dates to pre-Christian times and was an expression commonly used by the emperor Augustus (63 BC – AD 14)? He even stressed its message of good leadership through specially minted coins showing a hare inside the shell of a snail. Although the proverb is more than 2000 years old, people today still understand its meaning and frequently use it in ordinary conversation. That's the beauty of proverbs: their wisdom crosses the boundaries of time, space, religion, language and culture. Proverbs teach us in ways that are easy to remember and make sense to the speaker and the listener.

Today we hear St James describe wisdom as “pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, without uncertainty or insincerity” – but wisdom is not foolish and have you ever heard of it being unkind, selfish or unthinking? Even when wisdom is difficult to hear, it is not meant to be hurtful. That is the beauty of today's Gospel: Jesus is tactful and understanding at a time when he could have been critical and outspoken. A Persian proverb declares, “With a sweet tongue of kindness, you can drag an elephant by a hair.” In his wisdom, Jesus recognised the limitations of his disciples. As their leader and shepherd, he worked slowly and gently, supporting them even in their moments of thoughtless insensitivity towards him.

Gospel teaching

In today's Gospel, Jesus had just told his disciples about his forthcoming death, preparing them for the horrendous events which were fast approaching. It was an extremely difficult moment for him and yet, instead of being supportive or asking for further explanations, his companions argued about their personal status in the group. Had they seriously reflected upon true greatness and leadership when each decided that he uniquely fitted the job description? When Jesus overheard them, did he sadly quote from the Book of Proverbs, “the mouths of fools pour out folly”?

Jesus didn't need to boast about his abilities and identity, which shone through all that he said and did. Neither was he bragging about courage when he told his companions about his forthcoming horrific death. A true hero is often silent about his or her bravery in a situation where other people are too afraid to act. The person who lets everybody know about their gallantry was possibly not very brave, and at best, lacking in humility.

Jesus used the situation as a teaching session on leadership and greatness. The best guide shows the way by their example and the greatest person leads by their service of others. Jesus illustrated his words with a child, one of the world's most defenceless, insignificant people: those who protect and defend our society's “least, last and lost” will be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. As St John would later write in his Gospel, “The truth is a heavy burden that few care to carry.”

Application

We criticise the disciples for their insensitivity and self-interest as they argued over who was the greatest amongst them rather than supporting Jesus after he had told them of his impending death. Yet we can all look back and wish that we had said or done things differently in one situation or another. We are also concerned with our own interests and want to be recognised by others for our good qualities. We understand the importance of Jesus telling us to look after children who are, in so many ways, in need of care and protection – but would we look on children as role models in leadership? What happens if someone whom I consider less capable than I am is given a position of seniority over me? The very least that I will do is to grumble to myself and possibly to my loved ones when I reach home. How likely is it that I will congratulate that person in sincerity and willingness to follow wherever they will lead?

“He that would be a leader must be a bridge.” So declared King Brân the Blessed (Bendigeidfran) in Welsh mythology as he made himself the bridge across the River Mynach so that his soldiers could rescue his sister Branwen from her brutal husband, Matholwch.

Jesus made himself our bridge in showing us the meaning of true leadership and service. Jesus was and is our hero. Am I prepared to imitate him and become a bridge for others?