

# TWELFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

YEAR C

## PRAYER OF THE DAY:

Generous God,  
you will fill us with your gifts  
if we give ourselves to you.  
Through the example of Jesus,  
show us how this can be done,  
and by the power  
of your Spirit  
give us the courage  
to carry it out.  
We make this prayer to you  
through Christ our Lord.

## FOCUS OF THE READINGS:

Our focus today calls us to practice our faith in Christ by living like him. It is of little use to believe in Christ, but not believe in his cross. Acceptance of Christ means acceptance of his cross and also of our own cross in union with him. To take up our cross daily is to live a life of service. Christ's death on the cross is the culmination of his life for others. For us, too, they must go together.

*If you want to be my disciple,  
accept the cross and follow me.*

FIRST READING: *Zechariah 12:10*

*A reading from the book of Zechariah.*

Our God says:

“I am going to give a new spirit  
to my people in Jerusalem.  
When my spirit is in them,  
their hearts will be changed.  
They will look with compassion  
on the one they have killed.  
They will weep  
as if they had killed their only child.”

*The Word of the Lord.*

## RESPONSE: *Psalm 51*

RESPONSE:

Give me a new heart, O God. Put your Spir - it in me. Keep me  
with you, give me joy. Give me a new heart, O God.

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

1. "If you would be my dis-ci-ples, ac-cept the cross and fol-low me."
2. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, "Ac-cept the cross and fol-low me."



GOSPEL: *Luke 9:18-23*

*A reading from the Gospel of Luke.*

One day, while Jesus was alone praying,  
his disciples came to be with him.

Jesus asked them,

“Who do people say that I am?”

The disciples answered,

“Some people think you are John the Baptist,  
and some people think you are Elijah.

But there are other people  
who think you are a prophet  
who died a long time ago,  
and has come back to life.”

Then Jesus asked them,

“And who do you think I am?”

Peter answered,

“You are the Christ, the one sent by God.”

Jesus warned his disciples  
not to tell anyone about this.

He said,

“The one sent by God is going to suffer.  
The leaders of the people  
and the priests and the teachers of the law  
will all reject him, and they will even kill him.  
But after three days,  
he will rise from the dead and will be alive.”

Then Jesus said,

“If you want to be my disciple,  
you must not think only about yourself.  
You must accept the cross, every day,  
and live as I do.”

*The Gospel of the Lord.*

#### REFLECTING ON THE READINGS WITH CHILDREN:

While this Gospel is important in the on-going formation of children as well as adults, we must be cautious in reflecting on it with small children. “*Accepting one’s cross*” must be explained in language and concrete examples appropriate to the age of the children. We want to avoid burdening them with expectations beyond their understanding and capacity to fulfill.

After the Gospel, ask the children what Jesus said about those who want to be his disciples. (You may have to read the last paragraph again.)

- What does Jesus mean when he says his disciples must not think only about themselves?
- How does this help others?
- What does Jesus mean when he says his disciples must live as he lives?
- What does Jesus mean when he says that if we are willing to accept the cross every day, we will be his disciples?

Help the children understand “*accepting the cross*” means living for others, living as Jesus wants us to, no matter what. This can be a real “cross” when living the Gospel actually requires children to make difficult choices in their everyday lives.