

**TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY
IN ORDINARY TIME**

YEAR B

PRAYER OF THE DAY:

God of love,
all that is good and right
pleases you.
Show us how to be happy
whenever people do
what is right
and show
they care for each other.
We ask you this
through Jesus Christ,
our Lord, who lives with you
and the Holy Spirit
forever and ever.

FOCUS OF THE READINGS:

Our readings focus on the freedom of the Spirit to blow when and where it will. The Spirit of God is not, and cannot be, limited to officially appointed positions. In both readings, we find the complaint that others "outside the group" are exercising ministry reserved for those officially appointed: prophecy, casting out evil spirits. This attempt to limit and guard spiritual power is corrected by both Moses and Jesus. God's Spirit, and therefore the various ministries for good, are open to all. Any attempt to limit these ministries to those officially designated is an attempt to limit the freedom of the Spirit of God.

FIRST READING: Numbers 11:25-29

This is a reading from the book of Numbers.

Seventy of the leaders of Israel received the same Spirit that was in Moses. And when the Spirit of God came upon them, they all began to prophesy.

Now there were two men, Eldad and Medad, who were on the list of the leaders, but they were not in the tent with the others when all this happened.

But the Spirit also came upon them and they began to prophesy in the camp.

A young man from the camp ran and told Moses,

"Eldad and Medad
are prophesying in the camp!"

Joshua, who was one of Moses' helpers said,

"Moses, stop them from doing that!"

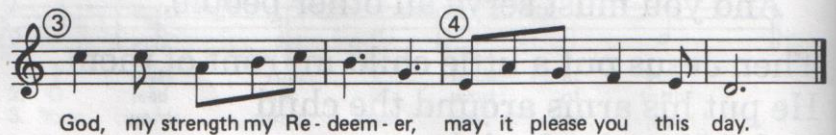
But Moses said,

"Do you think I am jealous?
I want them all to have God's spirit!
No, I wish all of God's people
would be prophets!"

This is the Word of God.

RESPONSE: Psalm 40

RESPONSE:



GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:



1. Je - sus, speak to us, — } Give us the words_ that bring us_ life. —
2. Al - le - lu - ia, — }

GOSPEL: *Mark 9:38-42*

This is a reading from the Gospel of Mark.

John, one of the twelve apostles, said to Jesus,

“Teacher,
we saw a man curing people of evil spirits
by using your name.
We told him to stop doing that
because he does not belong to our group.”

Jesus said,

“Don’t stop anyone from doing good.
Anyone who does miracles using my name
will never say anything bad about me.
And anyone who is not against us
is part of us.

“Anyone who gives you a drink of water
because you belong to Christ
will be rewarded for doing that.

[“But anyone who leads someone away
from believing in Christ,
would be better off
thrown into the sea to drown!”]

This is the Good News of the Lord.

[] Reader may omit text that appears in brackets.

REFLECTING ON THE READINGS WITH CHILDREN:

Before beginning the readings, it is important that the children understand the meaning of the word “prophesy.”

After the Gospel, ask the children to retell what happened.

What did Moses and Jesus both say about this?

Discuss with the children how we might have similar experiences in our lives.

- Perhaps we have been excluded from a group.
- Perhaps we have excluded someone.
- Perhaps someone has felt they were better than we.
- Perhaps we have felt we are better than others.

Do we know people who are almost always left out of games, and so forth? Why are they left out?

Jesus teaches us that he wants everyone to do good. We are all part of the same “group” or “family” if we belong to Christ. The Holy Spirit may act in and through anyone.