

## **16<sup>th</sup> Sunday Ordinary Time**

We associate power with force. To not use it implies weakness. The readings show a God who governs by kindness and patience: by showing compassion.

The first reading was addressed to Alexandrian Jews in one B.C. It speaks of God's special care during the Exodus. God does not act unjustly since power is the basis of his justice. Instead of blind rage, His power results in clemency. He manages a balance between justice and mercy. The lesson is kindness and forgiveness: to show strength by being lenient.

The responsory tells of persecutors intent on killing the psalmist, they have no thought of the God of Israel. It speaks of God's goodness, forgiveness and covenantal loyalty. Maternal concern of God is the answer to the psalmist's trouble, not the death of the persecutors.

In the Gospel, the kingdom is a place that embraces both wheat and weeds: good and evil. The owner realizes that violence, killing the weeds, endangers the wheat. The common good demands both patience and tolerance. This sense of compassion embodies Jesus' attitude of the kingdom: strength through leniency.

In a further exposition of the kingdom, the mustard seed and bush show the growth from near invisibility to full grandeur. The leaven is a small amount which is likened to a small movement that can affect all society.