

26th Sunday of Ordinary Time



Today's readings encourage adopting God, not ourselves, as the criterion for judgment. They persuade us to see the boundless capacity of God to empower others. The unlimited graciousness of God teaches us to respect others. God is the norm for judging.

In the first reading, Moses beseeches God that he can't provide for Israel alone. God confers some of Moses' prophetic spirit on seventy elders. Eldad and Medad received the spirit even though they were not present. God's power is for God to judge. Worthiness is not within our knowledge to judge.

In the second reading, James speaks of the unjust rich who treat their employees as objects for the satisfaction of their wealth desires. With lack of wages they will die. The Lord hears the cry of the poor, and the rich will suffer devastation. They fatten their hearts on the poor, with the risk of being slaughtered on the last day.

In the Gospel, an outsider expelling demons through Jesus' name does not detract from Jesus' power. Anyone who gives a cup of water to a disciple of Christ will not be neglected. Anyone who leads little ones astray would be better off drowned. Little ones can also mean those of weak faith. All these must be seen through the eyes of God. Believers make God the norm for judging.