

*Our Lady of Lourdes*  
12<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time  
June 20, 2010

Readings:

Zechariah 12:10-11, 13:1

Galatians 3:26-29

Luke 9:18-24

Fr. Bob

In today's Gospel, when Jesus was alone with his disciples, He had two questions for them. And the answers to those questions were important. He asked first, about the crowds. He asked about the people that had heard him speak and watched him perform signs and wonders. And part of the crowd, were those who had only heard about him and what he had been doing as he travelled from place to place. And the answer to the first question was disappointing. There were many opinions that were floating around. They had grasped the fact the Jesus must have been a holy man. But in general, they were off target. Some thought he was John the Baptist. Some thought he was Elijah and some thought he was one of the ancient prophets. The message, by and large, that Christ had, was lost in people wondering just who he was. And most were saying that he was a figure from the past that had been resurrected. They were not ready to hear about him being a messiah. They probably did not disagree too much about the things he was saying but, they were not ready to think of God present to them in such a personal way.

The second question was very much like the first except that Christ made it a little personal. He asked the disciples who they thought he was. The ones closest to him, the ones who had followed him everyday, the ones who claimed to believe in him were put on the spot. Peter was their spokesperson when he said that Jesus was the Christ of God. Jesus was the culmination of all that God had promised. And then he challenged his disciples by telling them what it meant to believe that.

The cross was a powerful image in those days. A sign of a very painful death and Jesus did not hold back by using it. Being a disciple of his would mean carrying that cross every day. It wasn't for a moment or for a day. It wasn't for certain feasts. It was to be a way of life that encompassed everything they did.

And things have not change very much over the years. The message has been proclaimed time and time again. It is no longer just a few disciples but millions spread throughout the entire world. But in many ways, if you asked the first question that Christ offered, many would miss the mark. Many would still see Christ as a stranger and not the God who is intimate with his children and close by. Many would still say, through their words and their actions that they don't really know who Jesus is. And unfortunately, many of them would say they were Christians. But for them, it doesn't go very far beyond that and Christ is not seen as part of their daily life. And so the second question is put to all of us today not only as to what we would say about Christ and our faith, but also, how does it impact our life every day. Is it shown in our families and how we react to them? Is it shown by how we react to routine situations? In our decisions do we turn to Christ for help? How often do we draw our attention to that presence of Christ that is within each one of us? Jesus is clear about who he is and is just as clear about what he expects. His words don't really leave much room for discussion as to what he wants of his disciples. The question for us is whether or not we have that same clarity. Where is our own discipleship in terms of personal priorities? Christ is clear. He wants us to know who he is and he wants to be first in our lives.