

Monday July 21 Reflection

“Teacher, we wish to see a sign from you.”

In our first reading, we are told of one of the most famous miracles worked by God in the Old Testament: the parting of the Red Sea. Even though the Israelites had already seen God's power in the plagues He sent to Egypt, they still doubted His ability to save them.

In our Gospel today, Jesus faces a similar problem. The Pharisees and Sadducees demand a sign from Him that He is indeed the Messiah sent to free Israel from slavery to sin. At this point in the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus had already been performing many miracles. He cured the sick, gave sight to the blind, and performed exorcisms. What they really want to see Jesus do, is something like parting the Red Sea just as God did in ancient times.

Jesus does not give them this sign. Rather, He offers a different one: a sign of contradiction. The sign He will give them is the sign of Jonah – it will be His Passion, Death, Burial, and Resurrection. Just as Jonah was three days in the belly of the whale so too Jesus would be buried for three days and then Rise from the dead.

Today, there are many in our world who demand a sign, like the parting of the Red Sea, from Jesus, they demand a sign from His Mystical Body, the Church. And, they will not accept Jesus and His Church without such a sign.

My brothers and sisters, we are all called to be signs, sent by Christ the Teacher into the world to bear witness to His Death and Resurrection – to bear witness to the truth found in His Church. Jesus has chosen not to send extraordinary signs and wonders; rather He has chosen to send us in our ordinary day-to-day lives. We are called to be Christ for others so that when they interact with us they will interact with Christ. We bear testimony to the truths that Christ taught in the way we live our lives and by what we say and do, and we damage our ability to be signs when we sin or cause scandal.

As we prepare to receive our Lord today, let us ask Him for the grace to continually be a sign of His love for the world and the fact that He has brought Redemption and Salvation to it.