



Twenty-Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time
† Sunday 30th September 2018

In England & Wales – Cycle of Prayer:

For Racial Justice and those who suffer denial of human rights

Keynote: God gives his Spirit where he will

Book of Numbers 11: 25-29

Moses calls the seventy elders to assemble at the Tent of Meeting, and there the Spirit of God descends upon them. *'The Lord came down out of the cloud... and spoke with Moses... took some of the spirit that was on him and put it on the seventy elders.'* But two of the elders are left behind in the camp, but the Spirit comes upon them too, and they begin to prophecy. This is quickly reported to Moses, but he points out that God gives his Spirit to whom he wills. Nobody has the right to control when and where the Spirit is to be active. *'Are you jealous?' Moses asks, 'If only the whole people of the Lord were prophets, and the Lord gave his Spirit to them all!'*

Responsorial Psalm 18 (19): 8, 10, 12-14 – A song in praise of God, creator and lawgiver

Letter of James 5: 1-6

The wearing of fine garments and jewellery was one of the chief ways of showing off in the first century AD, and indeed, even to this day! Then, as now! James reminds us of the transitory nature of such riches. *'An answer for the rich'*, he says *'Start crying, weep for the miseries that are coming to you. Your wealth is all rotting, your clothes are all eaten up by moths. All your gold and silver are corroding away, and the same corrosion will be your own sentence, and eat into your own body.'* Wealth, often built upon the payment of low wages to labourers under hire, by cheating in trade, or the giving of short measure, is fed by avarice and greed. But James, says, *'on earth you have had a life of comfort and luxury... start crying and weep for the miseries that are coming to you. Your wealth is all rotting, your clothes are all eaten up by moths!'*

Gospel according to Mark 9: 38-43, 45, 47-48

'Master, we saw a man who is not one of us casting out devils in your name; and because he was not one of us we tried to stop him.' Last Sunday's gospel had Jesus instructing his followers what it means to be a true disciple. Today, Jesus shows them the true disciple is not to be possessive, but must recognise the Spirit of God at work in others. The jealous use of power, authority, or relationship is to have no part to play in true discipleship. The evangelist, Mark, then gives us a list of sayings of Jesus *'if your hand should cause you to sin, cut it off; it is better for you to enter into life crippled, than to have two hands and go to Gehenna.'* This place 'Gehenna' was the city rubbish tip, a valley to the southwest of Jerusalem, a place of abomination, unclean and often used to dispose of the corpses of the poor among the rotten rubbish and the smouldering fires. Definitely not the place to go! These 'sayings' are strong in character and emphasise the essential nature of discipleship *'If anyone gives you a cup of water to drink just because you belong to Christ, then I tell you solemnly, he will most certainly not lose his reward.'*