

It means trusting in God even when suffering comes one's way.

**24th Sunday in Ordinary Time
September 13, 2009**

I often think of how amazing it must have been to be one of the disciples who traveled with Jesus. Imagine being that close to the Lord, hearing His teaching, witnessing His miracles and knowing Him so well! What heady times those early days must have been! How privileged those disciples must have felt!

That's why today's Gospel passage is so important. The apostles and disciples probably thought that those happy, if exhausting, times would last forever. That is why Jesus had to begin to prepare them for the final work of the Messiah, which was to face His death before He would rise on the third day. As He prepares them Peter protests and rebukes the Lord for such talk. Jesus reacts in an uncharacteristically angry way. He sees the hand of Satan, using Peter's love to tempt Jesus to avoid His role as suffering servant and ransom for the many. Peter is not thinking as God does, in ways of total self-giving, but as human beings do, in ways of self-preservation.

Jesus warns not only the disciples, but the whole crowd following Him, what discipleship means. It means trusting in God's plan more than one's own instincts. It means acknowledging that the old person must die to self before the new life of the resurrection can happen. It means trusting in God even when suffering comes one's way. It means staying faithful to God in the times and the ways that are difficult as well as in the times and ways that are easy. It means facing death when death comes without losing sight of and hope of the resurrection.

Jesus warns all of us that discipleship is not always easy. Sometimes it can be painful and horrifying. In the end though, it is the only thing that matters.

God bless you.
Fr. Pat