

Twenty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time -B -2021
Duet. 4.1-2,6-8///James 1.17-22///Mark 7.1-8,14-15,21-23

→e pluribus unum....out of many, onein God we Trust....one nation under God....God,
Country and Notre Dame

→these are all familiar mottos...slogans... and sayings...that in some way most of us have either
ascribed to...or endorsed throughout our lives...in fact...e pluribus unum is considered is the
motto of the United States....

→and so as we maneuver thru life we often look for some motto...an axiom...a tidbit of
wisdom to provide us with some direction and pathway...

→and similar bits of wisdom seem to be abounding these days...because if you do a brief
search on the internet and you can come up with all kinds of mottos (like)....

some examples: --*Talk doesn't cook the rice...*

--you have zero percent of scoring on shots you don't take

*--there comes a moment when you have to stop revving up the car and
shove it in gear*

*--you may not like all my methods...but I like my way of doing something
better than your way of doing nothing....*

*--pray to God to be saved from the storm...but keep rowing toward the
shore...*

and perhaps one that is most appropriate for the times we are living through right now....

I live in a world I don't understand anymore.

→today...we also hear some mottos...some morsels of wisdom from our Scripture readings as well.

→from Deuteronomy: [we hear]...This great nation is truly a wise and intelligent people”

→from James: Be doers of the word and not hearers.

→and from our gospel: Nothing that enters one from outside can defile that person...but rather the things that come from within is what defiles...

→all appropriate messages...for this day and time within our country and world as we continue to face the changing circumstances of the virus...

...and...[for]...what I believe to be...the overall unraveling of the foundation and principles of our country, morals, and basic understanding **of** the common good.

PAUSE

→there are times...in our lives...both as individuals and as a collective body when we need to take stock of who we are...of what we want to become...and what we owe to ourselves, our communities and the world.

→and in the face of this virus and pandemic...which has gone on way to long...I believe now is such a time.

→as each day goes by...with all of the controversy...confusion...self-centeredness...

→...where the desire to support and focus on the common good seems to be rapidly diminishing...

→...and individuality, independence and self-determination seems to be overtaking any understanding of community, well-being and unity

→...we perhaps need to ask ourselves what it means to be part of a community...part of a something greater than ourselves...and what it means to live with integrity and commitment...beyond ourselves....

PAUSE

→sadly...this has been a bleak time for us...on so many fronts.

→this pandemic has made us painfully aware of just how fragile life is...and what we easily can take for granted.

→the controversy, arguments, disagreements about the vaccine, and now face coverings have become contentious beyond belief...

→and the malaise, infighting, stubbornness, and constant finger pointing among our government leaders

→makes us no different than the Pharisees in today's gospel who complain to Jesus and question why the disciples do not follow the rules...

→to which Jesus replies by quoting the prophet Isaiah...who describes such people as paying "lip service" to God, giving "empty reverence" and paying more attention to their wants rather than to God's commandments..."

PAUSE

→we have all been called **to be the face of Christ** to one another...

→to be instruments of peace to a people that seem to be at war with each other

→to be heralds of the Kingdom of God in a world that sadly no longer believes...

→and to be a beacon of hope in a place where hope seems to be waning.

→and today, perhaps more than ever....this call comes to every one of us, in spite of our own personal opinions, political partialities, and our own personal desires, sins, and wounds

→today...as Jesus tells the Pharisee's and his disciples...he is telling you and me...that all this....which comes from within...**can and should** be avoided for the sake of the kingdom

→in simple terms...it shouldn't be about me...but rather it's about us....

→and as our example...we can look to Jesus....who was repeatedly misunderstood by his closest friends...

→we can look to Jesus who stood silently before Caiaphas and Pilate when accused by those bearing false witness..

→and we can look to Jesus who continues to be crucified for our sins and the sins of the world...and yet continues to love us and be with us....

PAUSE

→e pluribus unum....in God we Trust...one nation under God...

→ "this great nation is truly a wise and intelligent people"

→ "Be doers of the word and not hearers."

→ "Nothing that enters one from outside can defile...but rather the things that come from within is what defiles..."

→all pieces of wisdom that perhaps we all need...to recapture...and redefine as we live our life here and now...in the midst of what truly are challenging times.

→knowing **that** God will always be present to us...guiding us...as we strive to put our faith and goodness to work and into action...

Perhaps...to put it another way:

“No one cares what we believe, unless they can first believe that we care...”