

SEPTEMBER 28 FATHER ERNESTO DE CICCIO

Today's Gospel passage is very short, but even a few words can hold so much meaning. I love when Jesus begins by saying, "Let these words sink into your ears." He had spoken many words to His disciples and the multitudes, so why did He need to tell His followers, "Let these words sink into your ears"? Had they not been listening all along? Had they not been paying attention? We know how people can let something go in one ear and out the other, but Jesus is reminding us that His words should sink into our ears.

It's not about memorizing everything He said or reciting the Bible verbatim, but rather, when His words sink into our ears, they shouldn't stay there or pass through. They should penetrate our hearts. The words of Jesus are powerful and life-changing. They are meant to feed us—heart, mind, and soul. Therefore, we should take His words seriously. Whether we read them in the Bible or hear them proclaimed at Mass, His words are holy and far more meaningful than any other book we might read. After all, we call the Bible the "Good Book" for a reason, because the words from Jesus are good words, Gospel—Good News.

Have we been listening throughout our lives? Or have we not paid enough attention to what Jesus is saying to us? When He speaks, it's not just a speech. He is communicating directly to us. So, we need to let His words sink in, penetrate our hearts, and respond to them.

In this passage, Jesus makes the point that the Son of Man will be betrayed into human hands. He knew what was going to happen. He

knew He would face the cross, suffering, and death, but He didn't change course. He could have run away or hidden, but He accepted His fate. Why? Simply because He loves us. If Jesus had come down from Heaven only to think about Himself, we would be lost. But He came because of His immense love for us, even to the point of suffering and dying. The betrayal would have hurt both His body and His heart, yet He still accepted it.

The last line of the Gospel is perplexing: the disciples were afraid to ask Jesus about what He said. Why would they be afraid to ask Him anything? Are we afraid to ask Jesus for what we need? Not just fleeting desires, but for our true needs? We should always know that we can approach Jesus anytime, anywhere, and with any concern. He may not always give us the answer we want, but He will give us the right answer—the one that comes from above.

Let's never be afraid to turn to Jesus in any circumstance. Often, we feel unworthy, but it's not about worthiness. Jesus knows we're not worthy, yet He still invites us to come to Him. He welcomes us, hears us, and answers us. So, let's not be like the disciples who were too afraid to ask Jesus about what He said. Let's never be afraid to ask Him anything, because when we ask, we will receive an answer.