

Ballineaspig Parish Bulletin



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30th August, 2020

22nd Sunday (A)

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Gospel Matt. 16:21-27

Reflection

Challenged by Suffering Sustained by Love

The first 100 days in office are seen as very significant for the future prospects of an incoming leadership team. Critical eyes look out for signs of disunity and looming crises. The new leaders themselves hope for a honeymoon period where they would gradually grow into the demands and opportunities of their new roles.

Peter got no such honeymoon period. Last weekend's gospel saw him entrusted with "the keys of the kingdom". This weekend we find him being severely reprimanded by his mentor. "Get behind me Satan". Jesus seems to be very alarmed by how poorly Peter had understood the destiny awaiting Jesus as they headed for Jerusalem. Peter, like many newcomers to power was promising a populist impractical response, a robust defence of his master even at the cost of his own life. Jesus on the other hand was focusing on doing the Father's will that in the short term, was leading to suffering and death. In the long term it would lead to love and forgiveness overcoming fear, injustice and pain.



Peter and the other disciples could not understand how a loving God would allow innocent people, including His only Son, suffer so much. Today the same niggling doubt touches many hearts as we see war, worldwide famine and incurable painful diseases all around us.

It is only the Spirit of the living God can guide us through this dilemma. Heroic generosity and loving committed personal service to those who need us, can soften the protective shell of selfishness that guards our comfort zones. When that shell is shattered, we can courageously face the challenge of suffering and be sustained by an ever-deepening appreciation of the mysterious love of the Lord Jesus. Trust Him.



***This is the only way to discover the will of God
and know what is good, what it is that God
wants, what is the perfect thing to do.***

Fr. Tom Clancy