

13<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME YEAR A



**THE GOSPEL Matthew 10:37-42**

*And whoever gives only a cup of cold water to one of these little ones to drink because the little one is a disciple—amen, I say to you, he will surely not lose his reward.*

For our whole earth it is clean air.  
For war's end it's a peace treaty.  
For a virus end it's a vaccine.  
For the hungry it's a meal.  
For our racial problems

it is justice and love.  
For all who thirst,  
it's a cup of  
water.

O  
God,  
you ask  
little of us.  
Please help us  
give each other the  
"cup of water" we all  
need. Give us desire and  
your knowledge and insight  
to fix all the problems we have.  
Let us not ignore those souls that  
thirst. We all thirst for your living water.

**THE FIRST READING 2 Kings 4:8-11, 14-16a**

*I know that Elisha is a holy man of God. Since he visits us often,  
let us arrange a little room on the roof. ...*

At times,  
when prophets  
like Romero speak,  
they lay down their lives.

If we are not ready to go that far,  
to speak out loud and clear,

then give us the grace  
to stand by them, and learn

to speak quietly, each  
in our own way, for you.

**THE SECOND READING Romans 6:3-4, 8-11**

*You too must think of yourselves as dead to sin  
and living for God in Christ Jesus.*

To live for God.

O Christ,  
what does it mean?

Are we to receive the prophet, and at other times to  
become united?

Will you help us offer a cup of cold water,  
but let us also to receive one?

Be with us every minute  
of our lives.



**Reflection;** In the [First Reading](#) a distinguished lady in the little village of Schunem shows great hospitality to the prophet Elisha, even to the point of building and furnishing a little room on the second floor of her house, with a bed, table, chair, and lamp for him for whenever he visits. A contradiction: she is childless, yet Elisha promises that in one year she will be fondling her own baby son. She is shocked. But the promise comes true.

Then, when the boy becomes a young man, he suddenly dies ([2 Kings 4:18-37](#)). Elisha comes from twenty miles away and brings him back to life.

Life is given twice where there was no hope of life: death triumphing but life restored. It is contradictory, but is this the way of the Lord?

Then in the [Second Reading](#), St. Paul writes to the Church in Rome that they are baptized into Christ's death and are buried with him! A grim statement. But then Paul says, if we die with Christ, we shall also live with him, shall live a life in God. Die in order to live?

In the [Gospel](#) Jesus makes a most enigmatic, not to say contradictory, statement: "Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it."

No matter how we try to explain away that statement and neuter its content, it still means what it says. Losing your life is the only way to possess it. Letting go is the only way to hold on. How can such contrary claims simultaneously be true?

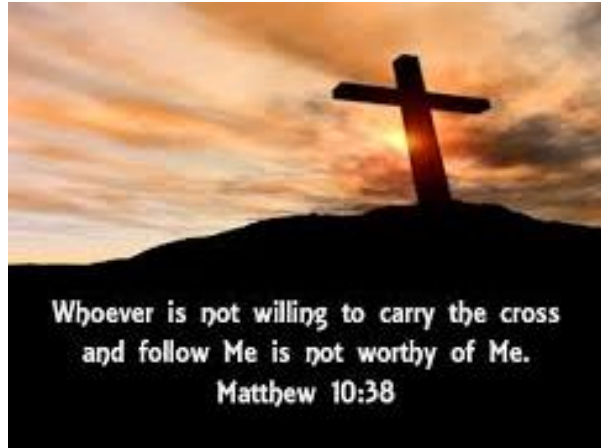
I want to suggest a metaphor. A glass has to start out empty in order to succeed as a glass. If it is sealed up, or if it is solid, or if it is already full, nothing can be poured in.

Does this sound like one more contradiction? No. A container has to be empty if it is to be filled.

The same goes for us. We have to be like empty earthen vessels, so that God can pour life and love into us. This is the source of all the "contradictions" in the Gospels and certainly in the readings this Sunday.

We have to empty out if we are to be filled up with God's gifts. John Foley, SJ

{\*Preparation for Sunday and Reflection taken from St. Louis Jesuit website. Gospel illustration from SMA Society}



Whoever is not willing to carry the cross  
and follow Me is not worthy of Me.  
Matthew 10:38