

Mark 9:30-37 dramatised
Pentecost 18, Year B

Storyteller: Jesus and his disciples travel through their home country of Galilee. Jesus teaches a difficult lesson for his disciples to hear, a lesson he wants only them to know at this time.

Jesus: Listen, the Messiah will be handed over to the authorities and will be killed. Three days after death, the Messiah will rise again.

Storyteller: But some of the disciples are not listening carefully, and none of them really understand what Jesus is talking about. Peter says:

Peter: What is Jesus on about?

Storyteller: And Thomas says:

Thomas: Something about someone like us handing him over to the police.

Storyteller: And then Judas chimes in, saying:

Judas: He's the messiah, God's greatest! Why would one of us do something like that, AND, who amongst us would do it?

Storyteller: The disciples then let Jesus walk ahead of them. They get into an argument amongst themselves about who is the greatest. Jesus takes the disciples to their home base in the village of Capernaum. There Jesus asks them this question

Jesus: What were you arguing about on the way?

Storyteller: The silence is deafening. The disciples are gob-smacked and embarrassed, for while Jesus had been talking to them about profound things like death and life, they were quarrelling about which one of them is greatest and should be first.

Jesus sits. The disciples know that when he sits it means he has something important to say. Jesus says:

Jesus: Whoever wants to be greatest and in first place, should chose last place and help and serve everybody!

Storyteller: Then Jesus sees one of the children at play in the house. In the time of Jesus, children were not seen as being very important. Jesus calls to the child to come to him. The child draws near to Jesus. Jesus greets the child, and gently wraps the child in his arms. He then turns the child to face his disciples and says:

Jesus: Whoever embraces one of these children as I do, embraces me, and far more than me—God who sent me.

Storyteller: Today's Gospel story ends here. The disciples do not always understand the point of Jesus's lessons. May we be wise to understand what Jesus is teaching his disciples... and us. Amen.