

21st SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (B)

1st. READING (Jos 24,1-2.15-18)

Joshua summoned all the tribes of Israel in Shechem, and assembled the elders, leaders, judges and secretaries. And together they presented themselves before God. Addressing the people, Joshua said to them: "Yahweh, the God of Israel, commands me to say to you: Your ancestors lived beyond the Euphrates River -Terah the father of Abraham and Nahor - serving other gods. But if you do not want to serve Yahweh, make known this very day whom you shall serve - whether they be the gods your fathers served in Mesopotamia or the gods of the Amorites who formerly occupied the land in which you now live. As for me, I and my household will serve Yahweh." The people answered: "May God not permit that we ever abandon Yahweh to serve other gods! For it was he who brought us and our fathers out of Egypt, the house of slavery. It was he who did those great wonders that we have seen; he protected us on the way and through all the land where we passed. So we shall also serve Yahweh: he is our God!"

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Ps 34)

I will bless the Lord all my days;
his praise will be ever on my lips.
My soul makes its boast in the Lord;
let the lowly hear and rejoice.

The eyes of the Lord are fixed on the righteous;
his ears are inclined to their cries.
But his face is set against the wicked
to destroy their memory from the earth.

The Lord hears the cry of the righteous
and rescues them from all their troubles.
The Lord is close to the broken-hearted
and saves the distraught.

Many are the troubles of the just,
but the Lord delivers them from all.
He keeps all their bones intact,
and none of them will be broken.

Evil will slay the wicked;
the enemies of the just will be doomed.
But the Lord will redeem the life of his servants;
none of those who trust in him will be doomed.

2nd. READING (Eph 5,21-32)

Let all kinds of submission to one another become obedience to Christ. So wives to their husbands: as to the Lord. The husband is the head of his wife, as Christ is the head of the Church, his body, of whom he is also the Saviour. And as the Church submits to Christ, so let a wife submit in everything to her husband. As for you, husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her. He washed her and made her holy by baptism in the Word. As he wanted a radiant Church without stain or wrinkle or any blemish, but holy and blameless, he himself had to prepare and present her to himself. In the same way, husbands should love their wives as they love their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. And no one has ever hated his body; he feeds and takes care of it. That is just what Christ does for the Church, because we are a part of his body. Scripture says: Because of this a man shall leave his father and mother to be united with his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This is a very great mystery, and I refer to Christ and the Church.

GOSPEL (Jn 6,60-69)

After hearing this, many of Jesus' followers said, "This language is very hard! Who can accept it?" Jesus was aware that his disciples were murmuring about this and so he said to them, "Does this offend you? Then how will you react when you see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh cannot help. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life. But among you there are some who do not believe." From the beginning, Jesus knew who would betray him. So he added, "As I have told you, no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father." After this many disciples withdrew and no longer followed him. Jesus asked the Twelve, "Will you also go away?" Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We now believe and know that you are the Holy One of God."