

Can You Drink the Cup?

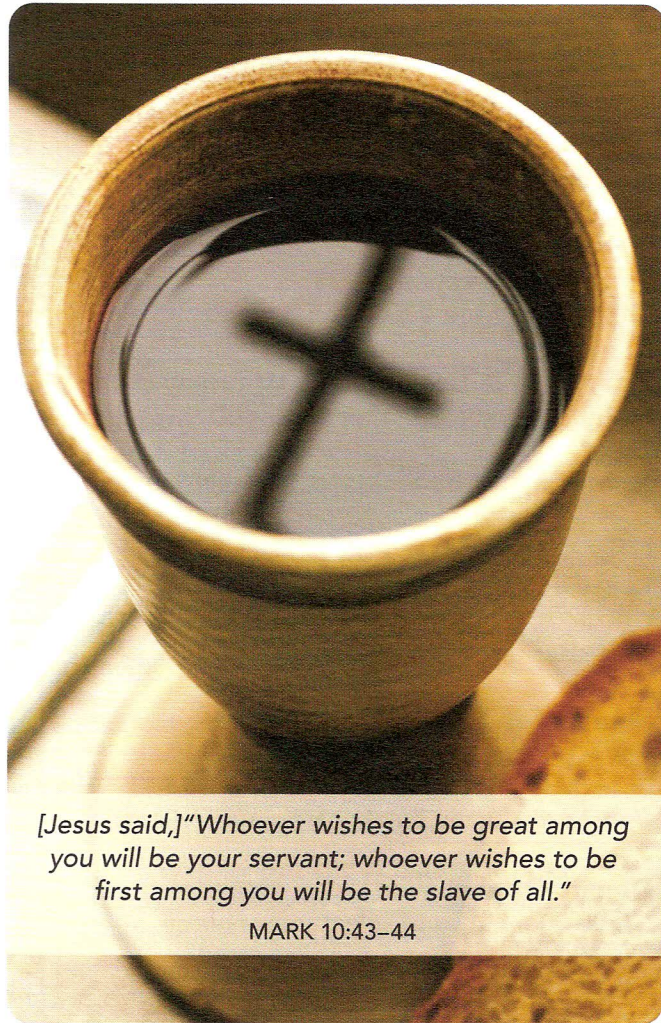
That is the question in today's Gospel that Jesus posed after James and John, two of his closest followers, asked for places of honor. They wanted to be recognized for their loyalty. Don't we all? Jesus asks them: "Can you drink the cup?" (Mark 10:38). Can you pay the price? And they both say: "We can" (10:39). Such confidence and self-assurance!

This is a Sunday that focuses on hardship—not the hardship that comes from the burdens of life itself, such as economic distress, racial and gender bias, or the loss of loved ones. Jesus was certainly concerned about these. However, today's readings have a specific focus. He asks: "Can you drink the cup that I drink?" Can you face and endure what I must? Can you follow me to suffering?

Isaiah refers to the servant of the Lord, that mysterious individual who suffers at the hands of others precisely because of his loyalty. However, his suffering is not in vain: "Because of his anguish...my servant, the just one, shall justify the many" (53:11). The spirit of this servant lives on in many stories about Jesus. It certainly does this Sunday. Like the servant, Jesus will suffer for the sake of others. How ready are James and John, you and I, for such a role?

Jesus then turns the values of society upside down. You want to be great? Then you have to serve others. You want to be first? Then, for the sake of others, you have to put yourself last. To follow Jesus means to follow him even through suffering. "Can you drink the cup?"

Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA



[Jesus said,] "Whoever wishes to be great among you will be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you will be the slave of all."

MARK 10:43-44

SHUTTERSTOCK

FOR *Reflection*

- * *Think of times when the welfare of another made you forget about yourself.*
- * *Do you always seek praise? Are you indignant when others are praised? What can you do about this?*

