

**Giving Testimony**      Thirty-fourth Week in Ordinary Time      Wednesday, November  
29, 2017    8:15 AM    Dn 5:1-6, 13-14, 16-17, 23-28;    **Lk 21:12-19**    (Christ speaking  
through us.)

**“It will lead to your giving testimony.”**

As a Church we gather on a regular basis and we profess the Creed about who Christ is, who is the Father, the Holy Spirit, and so on. All this is true, but it throws us off if we think that faith is basically about professing who Jesus was; rather **faith is listening to what Jesus says and responding to it.** It is amazing how many **Christians know so little about what Jesus actually says.**

This gospel reading is a case in point. Here Jesus is saying, if you follow me, you will be hated. Now is he really trying to massage people? Is he trying to become a popular leader? **Everyone will hate you because of my name.** This is one of the key points in the mission and nature of Christ is that he never tried to get people to follow him. In fact he warned them that following him would lead to a lot of trouble. The whole point of following him is that **he is the way and the truth and the life**, and if we can see the obvious truth that this world with its basic parameters is terminal, that it doesn't have anything in it to live for, and we start to wonder about what is really life all about, then when in a process of such questioning Jesus comes into our awareness, he is the truth. **But we have to be pondering.**

So this is the gospel today: “It will lead to your giving testimony.” **What is the role of the disciple? To give testimony.** And he adds, **“You must not prepare your defense beforehand; I myself shall give you a wisdom in speaking,” meaning that he will be within us.** He will be our companion at all times. In fact **it's actually his battle, not ours.** And we have to take very seriously this presence of Christ within us and his ability and desire to speak through us.

Now this requires, however, that **we empty ourselves of ourselves.** This is of course the very pouring out that Christ himself began when he became human: **he poured out his own divinity; he emptied himself.** He told his disciples if you lose yourself, you will find yourself. So **we have to lose who we are so that we might come to find who we are meant to be**, and then we will be able to speak and it will be **Christ speaking through us.** And that will really bear witness to him and we will fulfill **our call, which is really a call to eternal life.**