

## Bulletin Reflection

### The Cost and Joy of Discipleship.

In today's Gospel (Matthew 10:37-42), Jesus presents one of the most demanding teachings of Christian discipleship. He declares that our love for Him must surpass every earthly attachment, even the sacred bonds of family. Christ is not asking us to love our parents, children, or loved ones less; rather, He is inviting us to love them rightly through God and in God. Theologically, Jesus places Himself at the very center of human existence, revealing His divine identity. True discipleship begins when Christ becomes the supreme priority of our hearts, the lens through which every relationship, decision, and aspiration is understood.

Jesus further teaches that whoever wishes to follow Him must take up his cross. The cross symbolizes not merely suffering but the daily surrender of self-will to God's providence. In ordinary life, this may mean forgiving a person who has deeply hurt us, remaining faithful in marriage during difficult seasons, caring for an aging parent with patience, or choosing honesty when dishonesty would bring personal gain. Such sacrifices may appear as losses in the eyes of the world, yet they become the very path to eternal life. As Jesus says, "Whoever loses his life for my sake will find it."

The Gospel concludes with a beautiful reminder that even the smallest acts of charity possess eternal significance. A simple cup of cold water offered in Christ's name becomes a participation in God's saving work. A smile to a lonely neighbor, a visit to someone who is sick, encouragement to a struggling child, or a prayer for someone in need may seem insignificant, yet in the Kingdom of God these acts are treasures of grace. The Christian life is therefore both heroic and simple: heroic in carrying the cross and simple in loving others. When Christ occupies the first place in our lives, every sacrifice becomes redemptive, and every act of kindness becomes a reflection of God's boundless love. Ask yourself daily, who is number one in your life?