



**SEPTEMBER 27, 2019**

(LEC. 453)

**FRIDAY OF 25<sup>TH</sup> WEEK IN  
ORDINARY TIME**

**(OBL MEM SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL, PRIEST)**

**1. HAGGAI 2: 1-9**

**2. LUKE 9: 18-22**

GOSPEL RELATED: **CCC 2600**

**FOCUS: GOD'S FAITHFULNESS IS ETERNAL**

God's faithfulness is a common theme of the Hebrew Scriptures. Over and over, we see God make and keep promises to the Israelites. In the New Testament, this becomes even clearer. The prophets had promised a messiah would come, and God sent his only Son into the world to fulfill that promise.

God working in mysterious ways, and according to his own timing, is evident in today's first reading. The prophet Haggai delivers a message from God to the people of Israel, who have recently returned from exile. Haggai has encouraged them to rebuild the Temple, and they are disappointed that it pales in comparison to the original. God, via Haggai, assures them that the future glory of this Temple will far surpass the former. However, if the Israelites expected an immediate upgrade to the Temple building, then their hopes were misplaced.

For in the writings of the prophets, this theme of a glorious Temple is closely linked to messianic expectations. Jesus would not be born for another 500 years, and he would not bring glory to the Temple in the way people expected.

In today's Gospel reading, immediately after Peter identifies him as *the Christ of God*, Jesus foretells his suffering, death and resurrection. Jesus did not come to rule the Israelites as an earthly king or high priest. He came to save us all by opening the way to the heavenly

kingdom. When he died, the Temple veil was torn. This is not exactly the influx of silver and gold that the Israelites envisioned. But when we think about what this means, how much more glorious is it that God is now present to everyone? No longer is the Holy of Holies restricted to the high priests. Jesus' death on the cross was the final sacrifice that granted us access to God's presence for eternity.

Maybe some of us feel like the Israelites of Haggai's time. Our prayers have been answered, but we are disappointed in the results. We long for the "glory days" – of our Church, our government, or our own bodies. Maybe we had hoped to be further along by now – in our careers, our personal lives, our journeys toward holiness. Will our promised future glory remain always and only in the future?

Let us not be discouraged when we feel our prayers are going unanswered. They are not unanswered – they just may be answered differently than we want. May we trust that God sees the big picture. His plan is at work in the world, and he answers our prayers in due time in likely unexpected ways. In the meantime, may we heed Haggai's message: *Take courage ... and work! For I am with you, says the Lord ... do not fear! ... I will give you peace.*

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