

On this **24th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B**, we are invited to reflect on the profound mystery of faith and discipleship.

In today's readings, we witness both the challenge and beauty of following Christ.

- The prophet Isaiah reveals the image of the Suffering Servant, who trusts in God's strength despite hardship.
- Saint James reminds us that our faith must be alive through works of love.
- And in the Gospel, Jesus calls us to a deeper commitment: *to take up our cross and follow Him, denying ourselves for the sake of the Kingdom.*

The theme that connects these readings is *faith in action through trust in God and self-denial.*

In **Isaiah 50:5-9a**, the prophet shows unwavering trust in God despite suffering.

The Psalm echoes this trust, as the psalmist praises God for delivering him from death.

James 2:14-18 emphasizes that faith without works is dead, calling believers to live out their faith through concrete actions.

In Mark 8:27-35, Jesus calls His disciples to deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow Him, showing that true discipleship requires sacrifice and action.

Analogy:

Faith is like planting a tree. Trust in God is the seed, but it must be nurtured through action—watered with good works. Without care, the seed won't grow; just as faith without works remains lifeless. True growth, like discipleship, involves effort and self-denial.