

January 16 Monday

Reading 1 HEB 5:1-10

Brothers and sisters: Every high priest is taken from among men and made their representative before God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He is able to deal patiently with the ignorant and erring, for he himself is beset by weakness and so, for this reason, must make sin offerings for himself as well as for the people. No one takes this honor upon himself but only when called by God, just as Aaron was. In the same way, it was not Christ who glorified himself in becoming high priest, but rather the one who said to him: *You are my Son: this day I have begotten you*; just as he says in another place, *You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek*. In the days when he was in the Flesh, he offered prayers and supplications with loud cries and tears to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered; and when he was made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.

Responsorial Psalm PS 110:1, 2, 3, 4

R. (4b) **You are a priest for ever, in the line of Melchizedek.**

The LORD said to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand
till I make your enemies your footstool."

R. **You are a priest for ever, in the line of Melchizedek.**

The scepter of your power the LORD will stretch forth from Zion:
"Rule in the midst of your enemies."

R. **You are a priest for ever, in the line of Melchizedek.**

"Yours is princely power in the day of your birth, in holy splendor;
before the daystar, like the dew, I have begotten you."

R. **You are a priest for ever, in the line of Melchizedek.**

The LORD has sworn, and he will not repent:

"You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek."

R. **You are a priest for ever, in the line of Melchizedek.**

Alleluia HEB 4:12

R. **Alleluia, alleluia.**

The word of God is living and effective,
able to discern reflections and thoughts of the heart.

R. **Alleluia, alleluia.**

Gospel MK 2:18-22

The disciples of John and of the Pharisees were accustomed to fast. People came to Jesus and objected, "Why do the disciples of John and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?" Jesus answered them, "Can the wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them they cannot fast. But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast on that day. No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old cloak. If he does, its fullness pulls away, the new from the old, and the tear gets worse. Likewise, no one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the skins are ruined. Rather, new wine is poured into fresh wineskins."

Reflection:

Can you recall the part of the pants that got torn often during childhood? Recalling might cause us to giggle. How frequently the bottom side of our pants got worn out! If one were to be naughty, the trousers suffered the worst. I remembered daddy yelling at me, asking whether I took a knife to the bottom of my pants. This might have been the childhood experience of Jesus too. When his mom tried to sew his trousers with old cloth, Jesus would have demanded a new patch like any other child. He would have learned from his mother that, the tear gets worse when the new cloth is sewed to the old one. Jesus is the new wine, the new way to salvation. The ascetic practices such as fasting are like the old wine. The Pharisees thought that salvation was obtained by their own rituals whereas Jesus said that he, as a new and eternal priest, had offered his own life and won salvation.