

THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURES
September 19, 2021
Twenty-Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Wisdom 2:12, 17–20 † James 3:16—4:3 † Mark 9:30–37



Reflection: Mary Lanni, OPA

The second reading from the Letter of James poses probing questions about why there is so much discord in our world. He asks:

*Where do the wars and where do the conflicts among you come from?
Is it not from your passions that make war within your members?*

When our passions are tainted with envy, jealousy, hatred, or cruelty we cannot see anyone as an equal, much less a brother or sister. Someone precious to God in the same way as we are would not enter our thinking. In this state we cannot love or accept love because we are in constant fear of losing our perceived specialness. We need to criticize, judge and attack others to feel secure.

Even the Apostles had this problem. (Mark 9) They argued among themselves about their importance and who among them was the greatest. It is accepted that what they did was very human, as if being human does not carry with it the choice to do what is right or better. They were about to learn a new lesson on how to recognize the living God in each other. Jesus did not rebuke them but showed them in the beautiful symbolism of a child how to be like Him—innocent, trusting, loving, and above all, forgiving.

James 3 and 4 are good guide books on discovering why we have such discord in our world and how to diminish it.