

Robert Greenleaf was born in Indiana at the beginning of the last century - in 1904. For forty years, he worked for AT&T where he did research in the subjects of management, development, and education. He retired in 1964, and in 1970 wrote an essay titled "*The Servant as Leader.*" He went on to work as a consultant for 25 years promoting the idea of Servant Leadership ... a phrase some of you may have heard before.

Greenleaf's works quote from many sources. From an ancient Chinese source, the *Dao De Jing*, the 17th chapter is quoted often, where it speaks of four types of leaders:

*The greatest of which is hardly noticed;  
The next who is praised and loved;  
The next who is feared;  
And the last who is despised.*

Of course, the Gospels are referenced, one of them being from what we heard today:

*If anyone wishes to be first,  
he shall be the last of all and the servant of all.*

But this isn't always easy.

We have seen many different examples of leadership in our lives - parents and siblings, teachers and coaches, spouses and siblings, bosses and co-workers - some whom we loved, others we feared, some we despised. And there were who were a quiet and always-present source in our lives ... whom we may have taken for granted ... barely seeing all that they did for us ... perhaps right now - we may be missing out on noticing someone who is behind-the-scenes.

In our continued reading from St. James, he phrases the rhetorical question:

*[W]here do the conflicts among you come from?*

Reminding his listeners ... and us as well ... that:

*The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace  
for those who cultivate peace.*

Yet in the First Reading, the author of the Book of Wisdom tells us, however, that those who are righteous will be opposed in many ways. Last week when Our Lord spoke of His Passion - Peter tried to steer Him away from the Cross. This week Jesus continues revealing to His disciples what awaits Him in Jerusalem. They, perhaps are stunned by all of this, but instead of reflecting on what it all might mean ... they begin working out an exit strategy. In other words, they've already written Jesus off and are arguing about when He is out of the picture ... which one of them gets to be the big boss.

Last week, Jesus corrected Peter by pointing out that he needed to think with the mind and heart of God ... not the mind and the heart of the world. And this week, He tells the disciples that:

*Whoever receives one child such as this in my name,  
receives me;  
and whoever receives me,  
receives not me but the One who sent me.*

We all need to reflect on where we are coming from ... on what is going on within our hearts and our minds ... on how our desires and examples are influencing ourselves ... and influencing others.

As we approach this altar to receive the Sacred Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ ... let us pray to have the heart of “*the*” Servant - Jesus Christ ... who emptied Himself, becoming a slave ... and dying on the Cross for our sins and for our salvation. Let us keep our eyes fixed on Him and Him alone ... praying for the graces and mercy we need to be transformed into His image ... members of the Body of Christ ... and living as true children of God the Father, redeemed in the Blood of Christ, and filled with the power of the Holy Spirit.