

## Scripture Reading

### **A Reading of the Second Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians** (2 Corinthians 12: 9-10)

But He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong. The Word of the Lord. R. Thanks be to God.

### **Reflection ~ In my weaknesses, I am made strong**

**God identifies with the weak.** When God decided to send His only Begotten Son into the world to redeem His people from sin, death and hell, Jesus did not come as a powerful military conqueror to free the Jews from the dominion of the Romans but as a weak, defenceless little baby. The Son of God went on to live thirty years of His earthly life in a lowly profession as a carpenter. What a strong identification God is making with the weak and lowly!

**God uses weak instruments.** Throughout Scripture, God demonstrates His loving attraction and mercy to human weakness in His unlikely choice of persons to carry out mighty divine missions. The poor and simple shepherds were the first heralds of the Good News. The privileged witnesses of Baby Jesus’ consecration at the temple to His Heavenly Father were persons unrecognised in their society: elderly Simeon and Anna. Who could have imagined the exalted missions that God has entrusted these lowly people with!

**My grace is sufficient for you... (2 Corinthians 12:9).** St. Paul was able to ‘boast’ about his weaknesses because he fully understood that whatever he was lacking, God supplies through His grace. Instead of relying solely on his own human power, St. Paul was able to acknowledge his own human weaknesses and be happy to trust in God’s Providence and grace for his every need and weaknesses. Thus, he became a mighty instrument of God despite his professed many weaknesses: In his struggle with sin St. Paul said, “*I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do.*” (Romans 7:15).

**That your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God’s power (1 Corinthians 2:5).** The scribes and Pharisees failed to recognise Jesus as the Messiah as their thinking was based on human wisdom. They expected the promised Messiah to come in more power and glory. When Jesus failed to fit the mold they had in their mind for the Messiah, they planned to remove Him. Reliance on human wisdom continues to bring misery to humankind: *Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light... (John 3:19). The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it (John 1:5).*

**In Christ I can do all things through His power working in me (Philippians 4:13).** The very same Paul who lamented about his struggle with sin was able to say he could do all things through the power of Christ. St. Paul gave us a very good example of the unfailing hope in the power of Christ despite the acute awareness of our own failings, weaknesses and sinfulness. St. Paul was no stranger to sin, yet in Christ he was able to rise above his weaknesses and sinfulness to become the great and mighty instrument that God made of him in evangelizing to the non-Jews.

### **Conversation with Jesus**

Precious Lord, with all my heart, I thank You for showing Your love for me through Your strong identification with my weaknesses. My weaknesses are given to me as a grace that I may realise my limitations and put more trust in Your love, mercy and Providence. Let me never be discouraged by my weaknesses and failings but always remember that Your grace and power are always available to an open heart that is set on doing Your will which is love and mercy itself. Teach me to abide in You always so that I can say together with St. Paul, “I can do all things in Christ through His power working in me.” Mary, Protectress of the Faith, intercede for me. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.