

**Thought for the Week**  
**8th September, 2019**  
**23rd Sunday in Ordinary time**

It can be hard sometimes to discern the meaning behind the readings at Mass, or fathom what exactly Jesus is trying to say when we read the Gospel. It's only natural to want to understand everything and to see clearly into the future. Alas it's not to be most of the time. Moments of tremendous insight and clarity tend to come infrequently. Most days we just have to persevere in the hope that we are following the right path.

The first reading offers some comfort. Not knowing what God intends for us is part of the human experience. We shouldn't be surprised. The wisdom needed to comprehend God's intentions can only come from above – from the Holy Spirit. That comes as a relief. Except that Jesus makes it pretty clear in the gospel that following him requires making some significant sacrifices. It isn't a soft option.

So whilst we shouldn't worry too much about not understanding everything, or seeing God clearly every day, we definitely should stick to task, and trust that in doing the basics to the best of our ability, and with a trusting disposition, God will look after the rest.

Mother Theresa famously suffered over fifty years of spiritual dryness and desolation, feeling abandoned by God. And yet she persevered, and her life was an extraordinary example of selfless love and boundless creativity.

*“Not all of us can do great things”, she said, “but we can do small things with great love”. She also said “God doesn't require us to succeed, he only requires that we try.”*