

Thoughts on the Daily Word

5th Week of Year. Tuesday 10th February. Readings: 1 Kings 8:22-23,27-30; Psalm: 83; Gospel: Mark 7:1-13.

The term elders could mean what we call today priestly ministry. Presbyteral ministry follows on from the elders of the synagogue rather than the temple priesthood. Jesus the founder of our Christian ministry had a unique ministry according to the order of Melchizedek, unique and unrepeatable. Despite this the elite of all religions usually attempt to create what we call today, clericalism. Often consisting of a pattern of rituals and practices that accentuate a certain status and position. Since the period of Constantine in the 4th century the alliance between throne and altar, until modern times, has tended toward an ever-accentuated power structure that attempts to control God. The writer of Kings is careful to have Solomon not restrict God's presence to the royal temple, probably in that light of the temple's later destruction by the Babylonian empire. Pope Francis reminds us that clericalism can afflict all in the Church, not just clergy, and that it is an ever-present challenge to see ourselves as a part of the sheep, with the same smell!