

Thoughts on the Daily Word:

33rd Week of Year. Monday 20th November. Readings: 1 Maccabees 1:10-15,41-43,54-57,62-64; Psalm: 118; Luke 18:35-43.

The historical story of the Maccabees describes in detail the suffering of the Jewish people under their Greek masters. It is a clash between the new Hellenistic culture and the ancient religions of the Middle East. Antiochus is trying to unify his part of what had been Alexander the Great's amazing conquests. Local religions and loyalties were a threat to their fragile empires. Undoubtedly there were Jews who preferred at least something of this new culture. Perhaps bound by the Law they were looking for freedom. In the Gospel the journey of Jesus to Jerusalem can be seen as that search for a new freedom. The offer of Jesus would challenge the old understanding of Law and religion. The blind man relies on faith, not Law. This will be the challenge to Christianity.