



SAINT LOUIS ABBEY



Homily – Father Michael Brunner, O.S.B.

Vanity of vanities, says Qoheleth,
all things are vanity!

The first reading is a poetic description of the
deterioration and failure of human bodies systems in old
age.

One way or the other, this is the end of us all...death. So the inspired writer
says...Follow the ways of your heart, the vision of your eyes; Yet understand
that as regards all this, God will bring you to judgment.

The ways of our hearts and eyes can get us into trouble if we are not careful.
And despite our best efforts, most of us fail often enough in being careful.
Jesus has to call the attention of his disciples, and so us, to something
important.

Pay attention he says...The Son of Man is to be handed over to men.

The last sentence of the Gospel is
revealing: although they didn't understand,
they were afraid to ask him about this
saying.

They didn't understand, and maybe we don't either.

How often we are afraid to acknowledge what we do not want to
see, but which we do see, which is all around us...Jesus Christ, God
the Son of God was handed over to human beings. Not for just
three days of trial, abuse and torture and death. But he was handed
over, became one of us, forever.

Yet despite his very careful explanation that whatever we do or don't do to the
least of our fellow human beings, we do or don't do to him, we are afraid to see
him in those least brethren, and our cities are structured so we won't have to
see them.



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A young woman, a medical doctor at children's hospital, whom I am preparing for marriage told me about a 15 year old girl who came into the emergency room this week, with her baby, sick and crying. This child mother was so tired and helpless, she just covered her baby's head and face with a blanket, and didn't have a clue how to hold her baby or quiet her down. This young mother carried her baby to term, did not have an abortion, but what help or hope is there for this least sister or her baby in this life ?

Our political conversations in this country totally discount this mother and baby, and if they don't pretend they are not there they very pointedly say that they are not wanted and are of no value. While we — the big we in this privileged nation — follow the ways of our hearts and the visions of our eyes, we — the big we -- will ultimately and inexorably come to the same end as that mother and baby and we —the big we - will be judged.

May our eyes, ears and hearts be opened,
and may God have mercy on us all.



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