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20 TUESDAY

Tuesday, 25th WEEK of the YEAR

Esdras 6: 7,8, 12, 14-20

Ps 121: 1 – 5

Luke 8: 19 - 21

Jesus sometimes said things that disconcerted His listeners, and still disconcert us who read or hear His words today. Like His answer when people told Him his mother was outside wanting to see Him: “My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and put it into practice”, He said. Such an unexpected response is a challenge, an invitation to think again about both the question we asked (the implications of what we said), and His answer to it. Was Mary really wanting to see Him? the people who told Jesus His mother was outside: what was their intention or expectation? that He should rush out immediately to see her? that to do so was more important than what He was doing at the moment? For His part, Jesus seemed to want to emphasise that being close to Him, and having a claim on His attention, being “His”, was not a matter of family connection but of a very different kind of relationship, namely one of trust and faith in God and commitment to Him. It is the same spirit in which we today honour Mary: not simply because she was physically Jesus’ mother, but because she was God’s handmaid who listened and heard God’s word and kept it. If we call ourselves brothers and sisters of Christ, it should not simply be because we enjoy each others’ company but because we’re trying together to hear God’s word for us today, individually and collectively, in our private prayer and in our Christian community lives, and to put it into practice in the way we live and work and interact.

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