

## 26<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

*Numbers 11:25–29 Psalm 19:8,10,12–14 James 5:1–6 Mark 9:38–48*

The seventy elders in the First Reading who receive God's Spirit through Moses prefigure the ministry of the Apostles. Joshua in the First Reading and John in the Gospel make the same blunder presuming that only a select few (the elders in the first reading and the apostles in the Gospel) are inspired and entrusted to carry out God's plans. The Spirit blows where it wills and God desires to bestow His Spirit on all the people of God in every nation under heaven. God can and will work mighty deeds through the most unexpected and unlikely people. Both Joshua and John believe they are protecting the purity of the Lord's name. But, really, they are only guarding their own privilege and status. It's quite telling that the Apostles want to shut down the ministry of an exorcist. Even if authority to drive out demons and unclean spirits was one of the specific powers entrusted to the Twelve, it was not exclusively entrusted to them. But as Jesus says today, instead of worrying about who is a real Christian and who is not, we should make sure that we ourselves are leading lives worthy of our calling as disciples.