

SEPTEMBER 20, 2015



# TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME



WISDOM 2:12, 17–20

PSALM 54:3–4, 5, 6–8

JAMES 3:16–4:3

MARK 9:30–37

## REFLECTION

None of us are born with tough skin. When we are born our skin is soft, healthy, and very supple. This is the kind of skin that, when you get older, you long to have. Have you ever wondered why people tell you to “get some tough skin” when someone teases or taunts you? They are asking you to deal with the rudeness and meanness of another person and not let it bother you. As a sensitive person, I have never understood why it wasn’t okay to be a gentle person in the world. Do you ever feel that way?

Unfortunately, I will never understand something that happened to me when I was in fifth grade. I was asked to give a report on St. Mary Magdalene. The class bully tore up my report so that I could not turn it in on time—this wasn’t her first act of meanness nor would it be her last. But, this action obviously made an impression. Her jealousy of me (although I couldn’t fathom why) ruled her emotions, and my gentleness and lack of tough skin bothered me. I didn’t understand then what I have come to teach now—that those who want to be close to Christ usually have to learn to keep soft skin with a strong attitude of trust.

Jesus taught his disciples that when you receive a child, you receive Jesus himself. The image of a child is pure, carefree, trustworthy, and also dependent—not independent. Our dependence cannot be on things of this world; rather, we must rely on God.



“A BULLYING STORY”  
FEATURING “ROAR”  
BY KATY PERRY

[www.youtube.com/  
watch?v=2r-YKO9N9yg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2r-YKO9N9yg)

## ACTION

Stand up for someone being made fun of during school. Choose to ignore the gossip, ask a teacher for help, and make sure those who are quiet feel comfortable in your school hallways. If you are up for a challenge and don’t know the quiet person, get to know them. And, consider praying for a way to get behind the thick skin of the bully to understand and help them. None of this is easy. But as you act in Jesus’ name, you will be strengthened.

## JOURNALING QUESTIONS

- What are some things that bother you about yourself? What would you change?
- Are you too thick-skinned to see when another person is hurt? Or, do you feel that you are too soft-skinned to speak up and ask for help when you need it?