

St John the Almsgiver (560-619) also known as John the Merciful, Cypriot by birth, was a widower. He was probably over 50 when he was appointed as Patriarch of Alexandria. He sought to serve his masters, the poor, through the direct giving of alms and the establishing of hospitals.



First Reading: (Heb 9:2-3, 11-14) A tent was prepared, the outer one, in which were the lampstand and the table and the bread of the Presence; it is called the Holy Place. Behind the second curtain stood a tent called the Holy of Holies. But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) he entered once for all into the Holy Place, taking not the blood of goats and calves but his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. For if the sprinkling of defiled persons with the blood of goats and bulls and with the ashes of a heifer sanctifies for the purifica-

tion of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

Ps 46:2-3, 6-9

**R./ God goes up with shouts of joy;
the Lord goes up with trumpet
blast.**

Gospel: (Mk 3:19-21) Jesus went home; and the crowd came together again, so that they could not even eat. And when his family heard it, they went out to seize him, for people were saying, "He is beside himself."

REFLECTION

Today's Gospel presents two kinds of reactions, but originating in a similar attitude. The eyes of the crowd were focused on the immediate benefits they were to get. As a result, they could not move beyond those actions and believe in Jesus despite the miracles he performed. His kinspersons were aghast at the outlandish claims Jesus was making. They did not believe in what Jesus said of him because of the implications involved. They didn't want to face up to the responsibility or implications of calling him Lord. They preferred him as a carpenter. But many of them despite their initial unbelief eventually found faith. **Great things happen and real transformation takes place only when we are ready to move out of our little comfort-zones.**