

Read Mark 9.30-37

You may like to use this material as a basis for discussion in your family.

Have you heard about the success of Emma Raducanu, the 18 year old who won the US Open Tennis championship last Saturday?



She was a complete outsider but won this fantastic victory in a remarkable style – without losing a set in the entire tournament. After a difficult pandemic year, studying for A level examinations, and withdrawing from Wimbledon with health problems, she then made sporting history by becoming the first qualifier to win a grand slam title. She worked so hard for this victory. The newspapers said that Emma displayed “grace, humility and sheer joy.” Can you imagine how she felt when she won?

Emma Raducanu is being named a great tennis player – but she has responded to this with humility and grace. She has thanked her parents and the team of people who have helped her to achieve this success. How should we decide who is “great”? How does the world decide who is “great”? Is it the person who earns the most money? Is it someone born into a famous family? Or the person who has the largest following on social media?

In the gospel reading today Jesus’s disciples are arguing about who is the greatest amongst them. They each want Jesus to recognise them as special. They are jostling for position. Have you ever felt like that – at home, at school, or at work? Perhaps you wanted to be noticed, to be praised for doing something well, or to be rewarded for achieving something that you have worked for. We all like to have our hard work and talents recognised.

Jesus said that if you want to be great you need to be like a servant. In other words, not doing things for our own importance or just for appearances. Jesus said that you should put other people first. For Jesus, greatness comes from having the right relationship with God and with other people. How do you think the disciples felt when Jesus said this to them? Do you think they were ashamed of themselves? God doesn’t put people in order from greatest to least. Each person is important in the eyes of God.

Activity

- Make a list of people that you think are “great”. They could be members of your family, teachers, friends, sports stars, actors or musicians – anyone. What makes each person special?
- Can you help someone this week to feel great?

Prayer

Lord God, we know that you want us to live our best lives – for you, with you, and in you. Help us to celebrate success but not be boastful.

Help us to serve you through our support for other people.

Help us to reach out to one another with love and care, so that we treat each other fairly. Amen.