

Thirty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time Year-C 2019

A Message from Fr. Mark

Our Sunday readings today speak of the mercy of God that has “come down upon the earth” and walks the streets of our cities. The first reading from the Book of Wisdom declares, “You have mercy on all... you overlook people's sins that they may repent. For you love all things that are and loathe nothing that you have made... you rebuke offenders little by little, warn them and remind them of the sins they are committing, that they may abandon their wickedness and believe in you, O LORD!”

We believe that Jesus is the Divine Mercy itself who became a man and walked the earth. In the Gospel, it says that Jesus was walking through the streets of Jericho when he looked up and saw a sinner named Zacchaeus in a tree. Jesus felt compassion toward him and even went to his home, which caused Zacchaeus to completely change his sinful life. (Luke 19:1-10)

This is a beautiful description of what also happens when priests and religious men and women walk through our community and help inspire sinners to trust in God's mercy. This week is National Vocation Awareness Week (November 3-9, 2019) which has been established by the United States Bishops as a time to promote to the priesthood, diaconate and consecrated life. Priests and deacons and religious sisters are those people who continue to walk the streets of our land so that people can still experience the joy and hope that comes from God's mercy. During this week our priests and deacons and religious sisters will be giving homilies and talks at Masses and in our religious education classes about the importance of promoting vocations. If we don't have vocations, who will walk the streets of Stockton to give people hope and salvation? As Jesus says: “I will make you fishers of men” (Mark 1:17) and “The harvest is rich, and laborers are few.” (Matthew 39:7)