

### Third Sunday in Ordinary Time – Year A 2019-2020

A Message from Fr. Mark

*“Upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone.”* These are the words of our first reading from the Old Testament (Isaiah 9:1), which were also quoted by St. Matthew in our Gospel Reading (Matthew 4:16). The arrival of Jesus in Galilee was the occasion for proclaiming this joyful good news. However, these words can also be applied whenever the light of Christ shines in our dark world.

Yesterday a light shone in San Francisco as we walked for life and radiated the joy of our Catholic belief that all human life is sacred! Unfortunately, there are always a few who oppose us, but often it is because they are misinformed about the realities of abortion. Some people think that abortion is a positive thing for women. I learned otherwise when I heard the testimony of a woman psychologist who came to speak to all of the priests of the Stockton Diocese several years ago. Her name is Dr. Theresa Burke, and she told the story of something that happened early in her career as a psychologist. She was leading a support group for women who suffered from eating disorders. As each of them shared their stories, it was revealed that several of them had had abortions. As Dr. Burke got to know each of these women, she later discovered that ALL of them had had abortions! This caused her to change her entire practice and to refocus her career on helping women overcome the devastating effects of Post-Abortion Syndrome. She wrote a marvelous book called “Forbidden Grief: The Unspoken Pain of Abortion”, which reveals the truth of how women are always torn up inside after an abortion, both physically and emotionally, regardless of whether they understand the cause of their inner grief. For many of these women, their grief is suppressed and denied. Nevertheless, the grief “comes outside” and expresses itself in depression, anxiety, eating disorders, and anger. They are in denial about the real cause of their emotional issues. Many thanks to all of those who marched peacefully yesterday in San Francisco. Thank you for helping us shine a light of truth so that the lie of abortion can be exposed!

Sincerely,  
Fr. Mark