

ST. JOSEPH PARISH AND SCHOOL – OCTOBER 28, 2018

Dear Families and Parishioners,

The Gospels in the Sunday Mass are generally meant to give the theme for the liturgy. In this last month before we begin a new liturgical year in Advent, the Church is closing out Jesus' life journey and indeed the final journey for all mankind.

Today Jesus has completed the journey as far as Jericho and now begins his ascent toward the City of God, Jerusalem. In Jericho he meets a blind man who has a deep faith in Jesus as a descendent of David. King David had established Jerusalem as the City of God.

The blind man, Bartimaeus begged Jesus to give him vision again, a code word not only for light to his eyes but also the **light of understanding**. Jesus responds and gives the man both sight and understanding. The Gospel story ends saying that the blind man received his sight, now understands, and "follows him on The Way".

"The Way": early Christians were known as the people of The Way. Early Christians not only had faith in Jesus but also an understanding that He is The Way, the Truth, and the Life. They followed him on The Way. We are invited not only to have faith in Jesus but follow him on The Way.

The ordinary Way for Catholics to follow Jesus practically lies in fidelity to the sacraments. The sacraments are the special bonding of Jesus and the Holy Spirit with us as we journey on The Way.

The sacraments, but most especially weekly reception of the Eucharist, is the special gift of Jesus' companionship with us as we travel on The Way. Allow me to turn to an example and an image.

In climbing the mountains in Nepal toward the summit, most mountaineers engaged a Sherpa guide. The Sherpas know the route, understand provisioning for the journey, set shelter on the climb, and give both companionship and surety on the ascent. Jesus is that Sherpa for Catholics. One can climb without a Sherpa but the climber is wiser to engage a Sherpa. If you want to climb the mountain to the City of God, I encourage you to engage the Great Sherpa who comes to us especially in the Eucharist of our Liturgy.

The next four weeks we will continue the last journey of Jesus to Jerusalem and then acknowledge on November 25th that Christ is the King. If I may continue the analogy, Christ is the High Sherpa in whom we have confidence and faith as we climb because he will never lead us astray, help carry the burden, set our tents for the night, and guide us unerringly along The Way.

Restoration of the Parish Office and Rectory

The oldest building on our campus, the office and rectory of 1887, needs a new and solid facing. We have engaged Props Consulting to do this work and they intend to start November 5th. Props Consulting recently completed the double pane windows on the school. Their work on the office/rectory will involve new windows on the second floor and a re-facing with Hardee Board on the entire structure. This will be a long-lasting improvement, conserve energy, and add beauty to this oasis of St. Joseph Village.

Fr. Tom Acker, S.J.
October 28, 2018