

**September 2-3, 2017**  
**Twenty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
**Labor Day Weekend**  
**Jeremiah 20:7-9**                      **Romans 12:1-2**                      **Matthew 16:21-27**

*'You are thinking NOT as God does but as human beings do.'*

Living as they do along the Gulf Coast, the arrival of Hurricane Harvey, while destructive and a bringer of misery to millions, is not unusual to those living in that region. It would be odd for someone in Chicago or Maine to be highly agitated at biting winter cold and we folk dwelling here in the arid West are not surprised when we hear of brush fires and earthquakes. These things are not curses from God but endemic to the places where people have chosen to live. Appropriate for our Labor Day holiday reflections, this weekend's Scripture reminds us that becoming a disciple of Jesus, living our lives in relationship with him, will necessarily bring us into conflict with those who reject our grasp of God. The temptation to 'go along' with the crowd is always great, as demonstrated by Peter's attempt at deterring Jesus from going to Jerusalem. Jesus rejects the SAFE route and chooses instead to be forthright, direct and, in our language, confrontational. Jesus is not interested in BEING LIKED or winning some sort of election/popularity contest...he is interested in proclaiming the BEST options available for our selections, choices that will likewise demonstrate the veracity of who we say we are trying to be. In our polarized political environment this challenge can be seen so clearly when the Church speaks up on behalf of immigrants and yes...even those here without legal status, those fleeing dictatorships, people withering from disease or manmade environmental disasters, expressing dignity for life in all its manifestations; immediately the Church is dismissed as ignorant, our Social Teachings (going back for centuries) angrily challenged as unwanted and inappropriate intrusions of religion into civic matters and worse. On local levels people smile, laugh and cajole when they want an 'exception' for some requirement, program or reception of a Sacrament...and turn biting, nasty and angrily dismissive when they do not get their way. No surprise, anymore than we should be surprised by the destructive power of storms or earthquakes, it takes courage and reliance on the example of Jesus to peaceably pass through the storms of societal interactions.

*'Whoever wishes to come after me must deny themselves, take up their cross and follow me.  
What profit would there be for one to gain the whole world and forfeit their life?'*

As the Summer Season is slowly packed away until next Memorial Day, thank you for coming and sharing this time with our Santa Clara Community. Of special importance is NEXT WEEKEND's MINISTRY FAIR....an opportunity for you to become aware of all the assorted ministries, outreaches and ways in which you can move from the periphery of the parish into active involvement with helping us thrive. Please allow extra time in your schedule so as to be able to linger and check out the many options for YOU to be ENRICHED and the PARISH made stronger through your involvement within our programs and ministries. As well, keep an eye open for information regarding this year's **SAVOR THE NIGHT on October 14<sup>th</sup>**....a most delicious and fun evening of camaraderie, food, beverage and financial support of our parish home...you won't want to miss it! Until next weekend, enjoy the holiday, rest from your labors, look out for the school kids scampering to campuses and please remember, you are loved. FKB