

**August 25-26, 2018**

**Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**Joshua 24:1-18**

**Ephesians 5:2-32**

**John 6:60-69**

In the same manner in which Labor Day 'unofficially' marks the conclusion of the SUMMER season, so this weekend brings to a close the August scriptural reflections on Eucharistic themes. Having spoken strongly over the past weeks of HIS BODY and HIS BLOOD being the source of eternal life, along with the necessity for us to EAT and DRINK of his flesh and blood, this week we hear of the disillusionment of 'many of his disciples' to the point that they left Jesus and 'returned to their former ways of life.' In the same manner that all DEEP relationships require commitment and devotion, so too our relationships with Jesus cannot remain at 'casual acquaintance' level if we are to grow and prosper within our faith-relationships. For all our devout professions of knowing Jesus, God is still a MYSTERY and how God moves and acts will confound us. Being able to perceive the grace of God in the most horrific of situations is an example of how hard it can be to be a disciple of Jesus. When Jesus asks us to PRAY for those who persecute us, to be loving to our enemies, this confounds us...we who feel justified in being judge, jury and executioner upon those we deem our foes, we can think of Jesus' words as being silly and unreasonable. The Incarnation, the eternal WORD becoming flesh as a human, did not occur so as to bless our ways of living and treating each other...but RATHER, to call us beyond the lives and behaviors with which we have become comfortable. The Eucharistic food Jesus offers us in his flesh and blood is not to sustain us in a comfortable bubble but rather to allow us to see God's GRACE within the changes and peculiarities of life that rattle and confound us. Knowing that God is entitled and free to interact with his creation in any manner he wishes, how has our frequent reception of Eucharist enabled us to break free of old prejudices or small-mindedness? Are we open to having God love those we do not? Are we open to sharing eternity with those our culture rejects, condemns and ridicules? Are we open to letting Eucharist CHANGE US? Or, if we find out that God is interested in having a relationship with EVERYONE...will we walk away, in search of a God of our own making?

With next weekend's Labor Day holiday, our Summer sojourn comes to an 'un-official' end. Thank you for sharing these past Summer weeks, as well as this weekend, with our Santa Clara Community. Please keep our Santa Clara PSA participants suffering through the Santa Barbara Polo games in your prayers this weekend as they travel back and forth for this outing. Our September 15<sup>th</sup> LA CENA is drawing near...please make your reservations promptly as a wonderful way to bid adieu to the Summer of 2018. Lastly, please note our Parish Ministry Fair approaching on the weekend of September 8-9...a perfect opportunity for you to claim 'pride of ownership' by becoming more deeply involved in the life of Santa Clara. As the 'formal' Summer season prepares to slip away, please remember, you are loved. FKB