

**September 15-16, 2018**

**Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**Isaiah 50:5-9**

**James 2:14-18**

**Mark 8:27-35**

Not wanting to sound like 'Debbie-Downer' but...try as we might, heaven will NEVER exist here on earth. Since, at the command of God, we emerged and evolved from the primordial murk of our beginnings, our myriad human hearts, shaped by assorted philosophies, political persuasions, temptations, deficiencies and abundances have been and probably always will be, prone to pride, arrogance, possessiveness, wastefulness, deceit, violence, cruelty and division. Existing side by side with our darkest human impulses, the GRACE of God moves us to seek peace, generosity, compassion, renewal, healing, love, community, commitment, understanding, compromise, family and unity. While created in the image and likeness of God, we nonetheless must daily do battle with the dark impulses with which we have become comfortable. In this weekend's Gospel selection we hear of Jesus sharing his eventual path by which humanity will be given the door to salvation (his rejection by the people and his crucifixion)...and good old Peter, who frequently got everything wrong, demands that Jesus find another way. Not mincing words, Jesus shuts Peter down: 'Get behind me Satan...you are thinking not as God does, but as human beings do.' It takes humility to understand that, while we are created in the image and likeness of God, WE ARE NOT GOD. Our thoughts are frequently manipulative, vain and self-serving....it takes great courage to choose the paths of God, it runs completely counter to our human pursuits and hungers. Yet, denial of our human lusts and cravings is the interior escalator that moves us toward God and eternity. Bottom line...life here on earth, even as pleasant as it can sometimes be, is NOT HEAVEN...and life with Father, Son and Holy Spirit is NOT attained by satisfying our cravings, lusts and personal certainties (especially, in light of approaching midterm elections: our political persuasions.) The choice is ours....follow Jesus...or .....

Thank you for sharing this final weekend of Summer with our Santa Clara community. If you are here on Saturday evening and made your ADVANCE reservation, ..come on outside, check-in and settle in to enjoy LA CENA and have a WONDERFUL evening. NEXT SUNDAY, September 23<sup>rd</sup>, the St. Vincent de Paul TRUCK will be here for our 2018 BUNDLE SUNDAY. Clean out your garage and closets and bring down your excess stuff so that St. Vincent de Paul can repurpose it and generate monies for their programs. If you have LARGE items such as furniture or appliances, please call St. Vincent de Paul at 800-974-3571. Please take a Bulletin home for other news about our Faith Formation programs and ample other activities. Also...if you signed up for one of our Ministries at last week's Ministry Fair, please remember that our parish policy is that EVERY volunteer, for EVERY activity, ministry and outreach, must be fingerprinted and Safe Environment Trained before you can begin participating with your activity. The necessary material is available at the Front Office. What began back on June 21<sup>st</sup> is about to end as September 21<sup>st</sup> ushers us into the Autumnal Equinox experience...so sit back and enjoy the journey...and remember...you are loved. FKB