

October 12-13, 2019

Twenty-eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Second Kings 5:14-17

Second Timothy 2:8-13

Luke 17:11-19

On January 28 of 1986, the Space Shuttle Challenger was destroyed shortly after lift-off...not because of terrorism or the incompetence of the crew...but because an insignificant GASKET did not seal properly in the cold morning air. In a world of BIG voices, BIG events and BIG news...it is easy to forget that small things matter. The FULL story of Naaman in this weekend's First reading is that, rather than some arduous effort by which to cure his leprosy, the King had been told by the Prophet Elisha to simply go down to the River Jordan and wash. At first refusing to do so because it seemed so insignificant (rather than some powerful incantation and generous anointing), the King was persuaded, essentially with: 'What have you got to lose?' The Gospel likewise speaks of the ease with which Jesus can heal (if he chooses...and however he chooses)...simply urging the lepers to go and show themselves to the priests. What is noteworthy is the contrast between the GENEROUS and GRATEFUL response of the King in the First Reading from the ingratitude of the 9 out of 10 lepers who never came back to say THANK YOU to Jesus. A prudent and wise tidbit to absorb from these passages is that Jesus CAN choose to heal...but HOW he heals is not always how we might imagine it. When our lives are thrown into disarray: a diagnosis of serious illness, a family tragedy, loss of employment or humiliation from unseemly revelations, sometimes the simplest response is immediately overlooked...ACCEPTANCE. Inviting the grace of God to guide our choices and deliberations so as to ACCEPT that OUR PLANS for what we think is OUR life, may not be in the cards...is a HUGE and healthy step in adjusting to whatever new reality has begun to unfold for us. Simple GRATITUDE to God for the GRACE of LIFE...goes a long way toward opening ourselves to becoming reconciled to whatever hurtful/difficult news we must embrace. God may not take away our cancer or immediately provide us with a new job or eliminate past mistakes...but a genuine AWARENESS that God is offering us GRACE, even in our confusion and pain, can be just as powerful of a HEALING as what we thought we wanted. SMALL things matter: genuine gratitude, continual awareness/conversation with Jesus in our daily lives, a humble acceptance that OUR ENTIRE LIFE has been a gift from God, a gift with which God is always free to guide and direct us...even if we start to get too full of ourselves and expect God to do what we want. A sense of ENTITLEMENT is a nasty darkness as real as leprosy...it stains our souls and degrades our dignity...especially when we have arrived at a stage when we think we are entitled to entitlement. SMALL things, lived sincerely, constantly, genuinely, frequently become the mechanisms by which we thrive...no matter what the world throws at us.

Thank you for sharing this fine Autumn weekend (and Columbus Day holiday) with our Santa Clara community. Please make sure you have marked your calendars for the upcoming FALL FAITH EVENT on Sunday, October 27th. Beginning with the 12noon Mass and continuing into the afternoon, you are provided with LUNCH, a special presentation by Fr. Greg Boyle, S.J. (Founder of HomeBoy & Home Girl outreach to young men and women caught up within gang violence) and activities for both children, teens and adults. It promises to be a PERFECT way to help close-out this Liturgical Year and prepare for the Advent weeks just around the corner. The Bulletin has fuller information. As you embrace SMALL THINGS by which to discover BIG GRACE, please remember three little words: you are loved. FKB