



SIXTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

July 21, 2024

St. James Catholic Church

*3909 Harrison * Kansas City, Missouri 64110*

"Small enough to know your name, big enough to make a difference."

Reflection from Mike Art

In reflecting on today's Gospel I find myself asking what has really changed from 2000 years ago. Would Jesus looking out on the masses today still find his heart moved with pity for we still appear like sheep without a shepherd? One danger in modern society is we are without truly prophetic leadership; we are easily taken in by those who would manipulate the masses with messages of fear and hate. We certainly appear polarized and unable to see any clear path of understanding how we are all connected.

In the second reading, Paul is speaking to the Ephesians and proclaims, "For he is our peace, he who made us one and broke down the dividing wall of enmity". Breaking down enmity is about overcoming hostility. Further Paul proclaims. "In abolishing the law with its commandments and legal claims he created in himself one new person in place of the two, thus establishing peace." Peace comes from reaching out to in faith to one another and transcending out differences. In the early Christian community, both Jews and Gentiles found a way to set aside their differences and become a single community. They had to move beyond the legal letter of the law and act out of the law of love which Jesus showed them in his teachings as well giving his life which was the ultimate act of love. In living out the Gospel, we are called to love one another and seek the path of unity and true peace. Christ did not come to be a king seeking power and control with messages of fear and hate. Christ comes even now as a humble shepherd who loves us takes pity on us and continues to love us without judgment or condemnation. We are called to love in the same way setting aside our differences and realizing we are all part of the body of Christ.