



TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

October 6, 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 Fr. Garry Richmeier

Attaining any new wisdom, or any voluntary growth for that matter, begins with doubt. It is not a "lack of faith" kind of doubt. It is a doubt that where I am now -- my present level of knowledge, awareness, virtue, understanding, etc. -- is the whole story. This doubt is actually an admission or a knowing that there is more "out there" than I am presently aware of. This belief results in a natural curiosity which moves us to explore new territory so we might discover something we haven't so far. That journey leads us to new and sometimes unexpected places from which we look back and say "I'm glad I'm not in that same place today."

Our society usually looks at this kind of doubt negatively. We like to proclaim that our religion, our political party, our country has it all together, and any member who expresses doubt about that is considered unpatriotic, a heretic, or a turn-coat to the party. Constructive criticism tends to be met with a "love it or leave it" response, or something similar. This ideological rigidity prevents healthy growth and improvement.

We do the same thing as individuals. We like to appear perfectly put together, confident, and sure of ourselves. We see examples of this in how politicians present themselves. Any change of attitude on an issue, or any openness to considering other ways of looking at things is considered waffling, wishy-washy, or some other negative descriptor. The problem is that if we maintain this kind of thinking and attitude, we stay stuck where we are and unable to find the way out of our present problems.

My eighth grade teacher said "The more you know, the more you know you don't know." It's one of the wisest sayings I've heard. "I don't know" is not an admission of weakness. It is a statement of fact, and the necessary foundation for moving into new realms of possibility.

