

14th Sunday Ordinary Time

The mindset of “we are what we accomplish” negates compassion, yet that is our most important goal. Today’s readings rivet our attention on the down and out, the rejects of society.

In the first reading, the author seeks to console Israel after yet another conqueror arrives; assumed to be Alexander the great in 332BC. The author invites them to joy because of God’s involvement. He longs for a return of Davidic kingdom but on a non-material level. The king arrives on a foal (the animal linked to the anointing of kings), signifying a peaceful arrival: not a horse which suggests warfare. He will extend Israel’s borders to include all the civilized world.

In the responsorial, “the Lord is gracious and merciful.” The word merciful derives from the Hebrew word for womb. The Lord has the same compassion as a mother for the child in her womb.

In the Gospel, Matthew speaks of Jesus in the manner of Lady Wisdom. This is directed to the people who the Pharisees despise for not taking the yoke of Mosaic Law. They are the “people of the land.” They are weary and find life burdensome. His invitation is to learn his message by accepting his person. This is the attitude not of the heavy handed bill collector, but of the gentle and humble of heart. This is the yoke they will find light.