



ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

THIS SUNDAY October 2 & BEYOND

When looking at something beautiful, I've found that it is often helpful to take a couple of steps back, just to see the whole picture. Then, I am filled with amazement and even greater understanding. That is true of reading the Bible, as well. Sometimes, it makes sense to step back a few verses and see the context of the reading for a deeper understanding.

The central message of the reading today comes from the disciples' plea: 'Increase our faith!' This is a request that I can understand completely. I often feel the need for greater faith. Like everyone else, I struggle with the daily questions of faith seeking understanding. Why is this happening? What does it mean? Where is God in my life right now? I imagine we all have questions like this



So, in today's gospel reading, let's take a step back and look at the verses that come just before this. Jesus is telling his disciples that they must forgive their brother or sister over and over. It's a familiar passage, and it ends by telling them to forgive someone even if they sin against them seven times in a day. Seven times!

No wonder the disciples say, 'Increase our faith!' Forgiveness is one of the hardest things for us to do. When someone sins against us, it comes with hurt, real pain. A betrayal of a friend is so much greater than a sin that comes from someone we barely know. It is easier to let that go. It is easier to imagine that we can forgive than to forget. We say that we forgive, but we may still hold it in our hearts. Indeed, increase our faith, and help us to forgive. It is like a millstone that hangs around our neck, pulling us down, further and further.

Jesus tells us something quite amazing. He says, that if we had the faith of a mustard seed, we could uproot a mulberry tree, or move mountains! Such a little seed that grows into a mighty bush. I think, ‘Yes, I have that! I have that much faith somewhere deep down inside me. I have the ability to reach into my heart and find that faith. It is enough for me to be able to forgive my brother or sister, my friend, my neighbor. It is enough faith for me to be able to cut the chord of the millstone that hangs so tightly around my neck and pulls me down.

I’m grateful to know that God is with me in my struggles. That He wants to help me when I need my faith most. I can hold the mustard seed in the palm of my hand. I can reach out my hands and embrace another in a true sign of forgiveness and grace.

Fr. Steven Schuneman, Retired Priest in the Diocese of San Diego

Readings for this Sunday

Habakkuk 1:1-6, 12-13; 2:1-4 Psalm 37:3-10 2 Timothy 1:6-14 Luke 17:5-10

Calendar

SUNDAY: 8:00a Low Mass (Church)
 9:30a Christian Formation (Fireside Room)
 10:30a Solemn Mass (Church)

—*The entrance to the church is on 6th Avenue—*

Note: Child care is provided at the 8:00a, 10:30a Mass, Coffee Hour & Fellowship follow the Mass in the Parish Hall.

MONDAY 7:00p (AA) Doctors’ Group (Fireside Room)

TUESDAY: Noon Mass (St. Mary’s Chapel)

FRIDAY: 9:00a Morning Prayer (St. Mary’s Chapel)
 9:30a MASS (St. Mary’s Chapel)
 AA Meeting 6:30p Rainbow Bridge (Fireside Room)
 8:00p Ladies’ Group (Fireside Room)
 8:15p Men’s Group (Parish Hall)

SATURDAY 4:00 Spaghetti Dinner (Parish Hall) Benefit All Saints’ Preschool and All Saints’ Outreach Ministry