

SEPTEMBER 6, 2015



TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME



ISAIAH 35:4–7A

PSALM 146:7, 8–9, 9–10

JAMES 2:1–5

MARK 7:31–37

REFLECTION

Have you ever been to a city and noticed all the homeless people? How did you feel? More importantly, how did you act? I went to college in an urban area and was told that I should not give money to those on the street—yet I was challenged to always see the dignity of the person in front of me. At the very least, I was to look the person in the eye and acknowledge them as a human being—a person full of worth. To this day, whether it is a person sitting on a sidewalk or standing at an intersection asking for money or food, I still have the urge to want to do something. This same tug happens to my brother-in-law whose actions offer such a great lesson—each person, no matter their story, needs someone to talk to and to be known as a person. My brother-in-law knows, by name, some of the people who are always on the street corner at the intersection on his way to work. He makes time to talk with them, and to know their story.

There is a song that I like which is reminiscent of today's Second Reading. The lyrics share something like this: What would happen if some poor beggar stumbled into church service and no one paid attention. And what if this poor person just happened to be Jesus? How would Jesus feel if people only paid attention to the rich and good looking people while neglecting the poor and unkept people? It's hard, especially in our times, to know whom to trust and how to act. Something in us needs to keep our vision straight so that, no matter what we do, we can see Christ in everyone—both the rich and the not-so-fortunate.

ACTION

Be aware of your surroundings. If you have the ability to make a difference and treat a person who may be less fortunate than you with respect and dignity, or provide them with food and water, find a way to offer this to them. Consider volunteering with an organization that provides food and shelter for the homeless. Or, make a meal to donate to this organization.



JOURNALING QUESTIONS



- What, if anything, about those who are less fortunate makes you feel uncomfortable?
- What things do you feel most blest to have and how can you use them for good?