

This Week's Scriptures
The Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
July 22, 2018
Jeremiah 23:1-16 † Ephesians 2:13-18 † Mark 6:30-34



Reflection by Mary Lanni OPA

The evangelist, Mark, recounts a beautiful story that captures the deep humanity of Jesus as he struggles with concern for both his best friends and for the “sheep without a shepherd.” There is no doubt that he loved his apostles and wanted them to rest, recoup and be together to share their experiences of the places he had sent them to preach. However, he felt **compassion** for the people who needed to hear his words and feel his touch. His compassion led him to choose the greater need.

Feeling for the suffering of other people is the root of this “better angel of our human nature” (Abraham Lincoln’s phrase). It was compassion that drove the outrage against the recent separation of frightened, confused children from their parents who were seeking entry into our country. It is compassion that demands that the resolution of this situation be respectful of the dignity of persons and never again be an assault on the innocent.

Almost as a counterpoint to the immigration issue was the outpouring of compassion for twelve young boys and their coach trapped deep in a cave in Thailand. The whole world was moved by their plight. Hundreds of divers, military and medical personnel, engineers and construction workers risked their lives to return them to their parents. When they did, the world applauded their skill, determination and the limitless compassion they showed for these young lives.

Jesus never hesitated in his life to act with compassion. We who share the same human nature as his should treasure compassion as a constant guiding principle in ours.