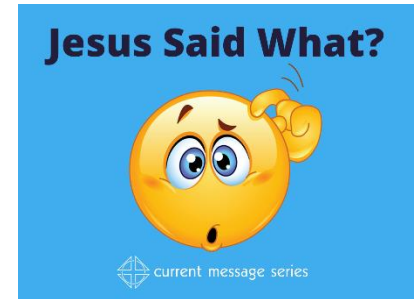




SPX Small Groups

Life is Better Together

Jesus Said What?: Week 4 - July 26
17th Sunday in Ordinary Time



- 1) When you are in a new situation, do you notice the big picture or small details first? Give an example.
- 2) In the picture Deacon Jim described, could you see the eagles and the Indian?
- 3) In the Gospel (Matt 13:44-52), we hear three stories of people finding a treasure – a guy in the field who stumbles on buried treasure in a field, a pearl merchant who has been looking his whole life, and fishermen, who need to sort through their catch at the end of the day to separate the good from the bad.
 - a. If your faith in Jesus is the treasure, how did you find it? Did you stumble across it one day by accident; were you deliberately searching for it; or did you have to separate it out from lots of other options?
 - b. Where does your faith fall among the other “treasures” in your life?
 - c. Can you describe why or how your faith “is a treasure” to you?
- 4) In his message, Deacon Jim warns about the trap of ‘all or nothing’ thinking.
 - a. Why do you think our society so easily defaults to that kind of thinking?
 - b. Are there times when ‘all or nothing’ thinking is helpful? When is ‘all or nothing’ thinking destructive?
 - c. What steps can you take to avoid living in an echo chamber (only surrounded by people who think like you do)?
 - d. Have you ever taken an ‘all or nothing’ position on an issue, and later changed your view? What prompted that change?
- 5) What steps do you take to discern if something is “of God’s Kingdom?”
- 6) Several issues around racial justice have become divisive. How is God calling us to respond to these issues as individuals? As a small group? As a parish?
- 7) After hearing this week’s gospel and message, is there any area of your life that you want to reexamine or listen more deeply for God’s voice? How can you do this? Are there any concrete steps you want to take this week?