Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Sept. 16

Isaiah 50 :4-9

Psalm 116

James: 2:14-18

Mark 8:27-35

Everybody would like to have a rosy life – no struggles, no trials, no problems.

Yeah, sure.

We know we won’t. Dark clouds follow us along the path of life. Rumble of thunder and crash of lighting seem to follow us. Even we as Christians have our crosses to bear. Jesus says so. We get through tough times, however, because we are Christians. We have the benefit of hope. We have the benefit of prayer. We have the prophet Isaiah. We have Psalm 116. We have Jesus himself with his cross.

We are fortified in our faith. We are strong. We are fed the Sacrament of Holy Communion with our Jesus. We struggle to get by. And our personal faith makes it possible. We are a community, however. A church that looks not inward but outward to others. Some of these ‘others’ are going through stormy days. Some without the strength of faith. Some without the support of community. Some who walk through the fog of misery and misfortune.

We are fortunate here at BMT Parish. We are fortunate to have you with our Caring and Sharing Ministry, and placing alms in the poor box, filling up the barrel with foodstuffs and school supplies for Response to Love, and all those second collections. We teach our children with their penny drives to give to Catholic Charities. You give turkeys for Thanksgiving and hams for Christmas. You knit prayer shawls and chemo caps. You have the Stanley Zynda Pantry for families in our HeadStart program. You help part the fog and stormy clouds that trap our brothers and sisters in need.

Now I ask you to widen your vision. Middle class working families are losing the battle to meager salaries and growing cost of living. We have people losing health insurance because this country is dismantling its health care programs without fixing the inherent problems in our health care system and offering nothing to replace it. We have an opioid crises, and a suicide crises, and a homelessness crises, and a human-trafficking crisis. Beyond that we have humanitarian crises – Myanmar, Syria, Yemen.

Is it not time to lift your eyes and notice the people who are hanging on their crosses? Are these people out of sight because we are too busy with our own crosses to bear? These people are dead to us. Yet we sing, “I will walk before the Lord, in the land of the living.” (Psalm 116)

Can you do something about these things? Anything? Anyone?