

Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary time 07/21/2024

Museums can have a lot to see. So much space to cover. Never enough time. Interesting things in every direction. In this instance, it's hard to know where to place our attention, where to focus, where and how to spend our time wisely.

The Scriptures today invites you and me to take a break and let our souls catch up with us. That is what:

Jeremiah is telling us in today's first reading – come to the Good Shepherd and he will nourish your souls in rich meadows of Grace.

Psalm 23 is proclaiming, Come to me says the Good Shepherd and I will lead you to green pastures and living water that refresh you – and then you will fear no evil.

Paul is advising - namely, that there is only one way to experience inner peace and that is to befriend the prince of peace.

That is what Jesus is saying into today's Gospel..." Come away by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while".

The image we have in today's Gospel is a very human. Jesus seems to recognize a certain restlessness in those gathered.

They are looking for some kind of positive difference in their lives. The men and women gathered seem to be longing for more than what they have so far experienced in the ups and downs of their day-to-day existence.

They appear to be spiritually thirsty, hungry, yearning ...choose whatever word you want. These restless souls seem to be looking for someone to lead, **someone to help give their lives meaning and direction**. And something inside of them is making them wonder if this Jesus might be that someone.

And so, they follow him wherever he goes.

It should come as no surprise that **our lives can be like that**.

There is a longing in each of us that **can be filled only by God**. We can try to fill it a thousand different ways. But we will always come up short. Jesus knew that the men and women following him all over the place **needed him more than they knew**. And he knows the same about us, knows that all our wanderings will get us nowhere unless we wander into him, and ultimately **into his arms**.

That's what Jesus wants for us, for him to lead us where we need to go...**protecting us, caring for us, sustaining us, and guiding us every step of the way**.