

Twenty-Fourth Sunday, Ordinary Time
September 13, 2020

*They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida, and said to him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus."
(John 12:21)*

The passage above, from the Gospel of John, speaks of some Greeks who were in Jerusalem at the time of the Feast of the Passover. This may have taken place in the Temple area where Jesus had come to preach on this day. These men may have been converts to Judaism, sharing with the Jewish Nation the hope of the promised Messiah.

They came to Philip the Apostle because they may have actually recognized him due to his hometown, the ancient city of Bethsaida near the Greek border. By their request, "We wish to see Jesus," they declared their desire to be in His presence and hear, up close, His teachings. They, more than likely, had witnessed His triumphant entrance into the city. This would have afforded them the opportunity to see Him [actually look at Him], much like Zaccheus had seen Him from the sycamore tree, as told in Luke's Gospel. Of course, people throughout the land, including these men, had heard stories of His dynamic teaching and His miracles. Like many others, they may have become curious and wanted more.

Do we, today, have this same desire? Do we wish to see Jesus for ourselves; to learn more; to have a true relationship with the God/man who came to redeem us? Where can we find Him?

If you look around you in this sacred place, you will see many "images" of this man. The Stations of the Cross provide multiple "images" of Christ as He suffered His Passion and death. In our sanctuary is a "statue" of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. And of course, there is the Crucifix, bearing the "image" of the precious body of our Lord, above the altar before you. Take notice that the words "image" and "statue" are set apart. These are only to remind us of that deep desire we, as Christians, should carry in our hearts, "We wish to see Jesus." Yet, the question still remains, where can we SEE Him?

The most obvious answer comes to us at each and every Mass. From the altar before you, in a short time, we will celebrate the Liturgy of the Eucharist. We believe that at the moment of consecration, our gifts of bread and wine are carried before God and transformed into the body, blood, soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ. We, then, will take this precious sacrifice into ourselves. It is at this moment that we can truly see Jesus. By our acceptance, in this moment, we each become like Him.

There is one more way for us to "see Jesus." When we exit through those doors today, after meeting Jesus at the table of the altar, one more promise is required. That promise is a commitment to live Jesus' two great commandments, "Love God, love neighbor." Fulfilling this, will allow others to see Jesus in us. And, I think we will be able to see Him when we look in the mirror.