

JANUARY 24, 2021 – THIRD SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME

Jesus proclaimed, “This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.”

It was my turn to meet the catechumens at the RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) class on the last five Sundays. You may be surprised that we still have RCIA meetings in this time of Pandemic. When most parishioners are staying home, these catechumens are willingly coming to the Masses and learning about the catechism. They are very compassionate and eager to learn. There was a question came up at the last meeting. “Why is God in the bible so stern? I think that that’s why young people don’t come to the church.” Answering to this question, I explained that God is just and merciful. Most images which the catechumens had about God were punishments. They say that this image of God prevents many people from coming to Church. Therefore I tried to show them the images of the love and the mercy of God.

“This is the time of fulfillment.” I believe that justice alone cannot make fulfillment. When justice meets with love, it’s the time of fulfillment. When we say about justice only, and don’t practice love, the time of fulfillment for us is still far away. Jesus made this time of fulfillment with his love.

Many people want to know about God. In the time of Pandemic, they are frightened. They have no hope. They like to hear the message of hope. How wonderful it is if we give them the message of hope. We can show them the love of God. Recently, there are some people who are not baptized yet, but keep attending Sunday Masses of this parish. They said, “We feel happy at the mass.” Their plan is to join the RCIA program for next year.

In pandemic, we usually say to each other, “Stay healthy.” We can also say, “Stay with Jesus.” When we stay with Jesus, the kingdom of God is among us. St. Paul said to Corinthians, “When i am weak, then I am strong.” We are strong, because Jesus is our strength. This time of Pandemic, it’s the time of fulfillment that we stay with Jesus and we deliver the message of hope to others.

Fr. James