

Twenty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

September 5, 2021

As I watch the news these days, I see the faces and the cries of the people of Afghanistan, again suffering the loss of their homes, their Country, their freedoms. Faces filled with fear. This has been the history of their land, their ancestry, their future.

Yet, in studying the history of this area this is the same story for ages. Even in the Eighth Century, B.C., it is recorded that the huge nation of the Assyrians was conquered by the Babylonians and eventually the Southern kingdom of Judah [Israel] were taken into capture and brought to Babylon. Even today we see this land conquered and devastated by other nations and tribes. Seems like a People never to be without strife, never to live in Peace.

So, the words of the Prophet Isaiah were the source of comfort.

We can sympathize with the people of Israel as they place their hope in this wandering healer, Jesus. The Gospel writer, Mark wants his readers to recall the words of Isaiah, "that the ears of the deaf be cleared" [IS 35:5] Here Jesus is presented as the promised one, the Messiah, the healer.

We too have been given the Promise of a Messiah. We too can afford to wait for God's activity in our lives. Perhaps we simply do not recognize God; we miss our encounter with God, perhaps we just don't know what to look for.