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Retreat Ministry • Parish Missions

"Come away by yourselves to a quiet place and rest awhile!..." Mark 6:31
Are you ready to accept the invitation?

6 April 2016

John 3:16

Wednesday of the Second Week of Easter

You can hardly watch a sports event without seeing some placard proclaiming, in scriptural shorthand, "John 3:16!" Yes, God indeed did (and does) so love the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. No argument with that.

But how great it would be if equal attention and enthusiasm were given to the next verse:

God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him.

Ponder that: "...that the world might be saved through him." The world – that means all of us, including you.

How many people I have met through my years as a priest who are convinced that they are the exception, that they indeed have been condemned by God: "I know, Father, God loves everyone, wants to save everyone – but not me. Not after what I've done, or failed to do. Not after the mess I've made of my life, or someone else's life. God couldn't possibly love me, or forgive me."

Stop. Read that verse again: that the world, the whole world, might be saved through him. And that includes you (and me!). No exceptions. And notice: you cannot earn salvation, or merit it, or somehow become worthy of it. You can only receive that gift – or refuse it: your choice. That gift is God's Mercy.

Once received, you are freed to offer that gift of Mercy to others who also need to receive it, to share with others the Mercy that God has given to you. That's the beauty of God's gifts: the more you give them away, the more you have to give. You will never run out.

Who needs to receive that gift of God's Mercy from me?

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