

## Fourteenth Sunday of Ordinary Time, 7-8-18

There is an old story about a monastery that was dwindling. The handful of remaining monks had a meeting to see what they could do. They decided to consult a rabbi who lived in a hut nearby. He was revered as a holy man. So the abbot went to visit him, explained their plight and asked what they should do. After pondering this question for more than a few minutes, the rabbi looked at the abbot and said, "The Messiah is in your midst."

The abbot returned to the monastery, convened his brothers, who asked what the rabbi had said. The abbot repeated the rabbi's words, "The Messiah is in our midst." They knew their faults and failings, and wondered. BUT they began to treat each other with respect. After all, since they didn't know who the Messiah was, they became more attuned to the other. They became the community they were called to be.

The monastery became a great source of hospitality. People came to enjoy that hospitality and pray with and for them. Soon some others joined their community...and the monastery literally took on new life. All were amazed at the newfound respect the monks had for one another.

And that is the good news. God is in our midst...in this Eucharist we receive God's, Christ's presence in word & sacrament to proclaim it. Jesus' own hometown didn't recognize him as the Messiah...because he was one of them. The prophet Ezekiel and Paul were aware of their weaknesses, BUT they also knew that one greater than them had called them and was with them in their prophetic and preaching ministries.

The obstacle for us in recognizing Christ is the same that the people from Jesus' hometown failed to see. We become so familiar to each other, that we fail to recognize Christ's presence within us and all around us.

Let us welcome that presence into our being and in others who come our way. God is good all the time. Let us be the same with and for each other.