



24th SUNDAY of ORDINARY TIME ***YEAR C – September 15, 2019***

This past week we remembered the events of 9/11 eighteen years ago and there is still a kind of numbness, shock and disbelief that settles in when you see the pictures of what happened then. What happened back then was not just a crime, it was an act of war...and there is a radical difference. Anyone who doesn't see that is still in denial.

People asked then, "How could God could allow something like that to happen to us?"

The short answer is - He created us with free will and human beings have the awesome capacity to choose evil. Sometimes, we even choose evil under the appearance of Good. Ironically, those who did the deed eighteen years ago believed they were doing good, for themselves, for their country and for their God.

In their twisted sick minds, they distorted the message of their Muslim Religion to justify their evil deeds.

For us to conclude that the Muslim religion has created these monsters is like concluding that Christianity has created the Ku Klux Klan and other white supremacist groups. That is simply not true.

We need to remember that not all Muslim men, women and children are radical. Not all men, women and children of the Muslim faith want to put us to death if we do not convert to Islam.

Eighteen years ago, a frustrated reporter in New York asked Billy Graham's daughter this question, "Where is God in all of this?"

She answered, "God is in the men, the women and the children who are helping to meet an indescribable human need. Go down to ground zero and you will see him there. He has once again taken on flesh and blood in a radically different kind of incarnation."

In the first reading today (Exodus 32:11, 13-14), we hear that God relented in the punishment he had threatened to inflict on his people. Probably because they chose evil under the appearance of good and paragraph 1735 in the Catholic Catechism applied to them.

In I Timothy 1:12-17, St. Paul tells us that Christ came to save sinners. We all fall into the category of sinners to a greater or lesser degree.

In the Gospel (Luke 15:1-32), Jesus tells us there is great rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents.

On this 18th anniversary of the horrible events of 9/11, we pray for the repentance of those who distorted the teachings of Islam on 9/11. We also pray for the repentance of those who distort the teachings of Jesus in our own time. If we allow the end to justify the means in our lives, we too will choose evil under the appearance of good and think we are doing the right thing.

For a few moments in silence, pray for all those who were harmed in anyway on that tragic day, 18 years ago on 9/11. And pray for those who did the harming. May God have mercy on us all.