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My dear Little Flower,

So often in life, the Lord directs our plans in ways we do not expect. We set out with one path in mind, and He gently (and sometimes suddenly) leads us to another. In these moments, we are invited to trust His providence and to walk humbly in faith, even when the road is unfamiliar.

On a personal note, I ask for your prayers for me and my Papa, as I accompany him in his journey toward (hopefully) better health—but ultimately, a realization of God's will. God is in charge. This has been a reminder for me that our lives, our time, and even our plans are in the Lord's hands; and the good news is that He never stops walking beside us. Time and again, He reminds us that His love and mercy is from east to west.

As we gather this Sunday on the threshold of September, our hearts are drawn to the wisdom of the Word and the invitations it sets before us. The readings for this 22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time invite us into a deeper reflection on humility, hospitality, and the way we live our faith in the world—an especially fitting preparation for our parish's journey into the month-theme of Catholic Social Teaching in September.

Sirach reminds us: "Humble yourself the more, the greater you are, and you will find favor with God" (Sir 3:18). True greatness is not measured by status or self-promotion but by humility—the willingness to serve, to listen, and to make room for others. Psalm 68 sings of the God who "provides for the orphan and the widow" and who gives a home to the poor. Hebrews lifts our eyes to the heavenly Jerusalem, reminding us that when we live humbly and mercifully, we participate even now in the communion of saints and angels. And in Luke's Gospel, Jesus teaches us not to seek places of honor, but rather to open our tables and our hearts to those who cannot repay us—the poor, the marginalized, the forgotten.

These invitations echo the very heart of Catholic Social Teaching. The Church reminds us that every person is created in the image of God and deserving of dignity; that our society is measured by how we treat the least among us; and that solidarity and justice call us beyond comfort to true communion.

September will be a month for us to explore these teachings more intentionally as a parish. We will ask ourselves: Where are the orphans and widows, the poor and voiceless, in our own community? How are we being invited to extend hospitality and mercy? How do humility and service guide our life as disciples of Christ? And how are we being called to care for God's creation—our common home—so that future generations may know the gift of life, beauty, and abundance that the Creator has entrusted to us?

Let us approach this coming month with hearts open and ready to be taught by the Holy Spirit and to act with compassion. May we, as the Little Flower family, learn to walk humbly with God, to welcome the stranger, to care for creation, and to reflect Christ's love in every corner of our lives.

Your parish priest,
Fr. JC Merino