

## **Equestrian Order of Holy Sepulchre**

**August 18, 2019**

The Letter to the Hebrews reminds us that the Christian life is like an athletic contest. It is not for the timid of heart! Running the race – living the Christian life – means laying aside whatever interferes with it, especially sin. Persevering to the goal is all important, and we must be willing to give our all, even our blood.

Despite Jeremiah's initial hesitation in accepting the prophetic mission and the obstacles he frequently encountered, he ran the race to the end with great fidelity, courage, and strength. He relied upon God to make him strong so that he could overcome the obstacles that others constantly placed in his way. He reminds us of Jesus. His prophetic message has been distorted by his enemies. They demand his execution. King Zedekiah is as weak as Pontius Pilate and delivers Jeremiah into the hands of his enemies.

In the gospel, Jesus reminds his disciples that he is on the road to Jerusalem where he will be immersed in the suffering of his passion and death. It is true that Jesus often preached about healing and forgiveness, mercy and compassion, justice and peace, love of God and neighbor. But he is also realistic: being his disciple,

running the race of the Christian life, is costly. It involves risks. At times it divides families and friends. Following the risen Lord is not for the fainthearted or those who want to “sit on the fence.”

We must keep our eyes focused on Jesus and his message. Doing this and serving as missionary disciples with courage and determination gives meaning to our lives in a way that nothing else can. Every person is created in the image and likeness of God. Therefore, all individuals have God-given dignity and should be accorded respect and love as children of God, especially in our conversations and interactions.

Hatred and racism have no place in the community of faith. We see growing fear and harassment every day, and public discourse sometimes instigates fear against foreigners, immigrants, refugees.

As missionary disciples, as members of the Equestrian Order, we must pray fervently for peace. We must be lights in the darkness. Let us embrace and further the values of the Kingdom of God. Let us strive for the unity and harmony for which Jesus prayed at the Last Supper and for which he gave his very life. Our Lady of Guadalupe, show us the way to be authentic disciples of your beloved Son!