

**3/13/16**

**I read a short story recently that really touched me, and I wanted to share it with you. It was written by a young man, Mike Calorie, who had recently made first vows in a Vincentian Community. He was accompanying a more experienced brother on a home visit. A woman had made a call requesting help, and they were going to find out the extent of her needs.**

**Mike had butterflies and his heart was beating rapidly, because he didn't know what to expect. He decided to be as inconspicuous as possible.**

**As he followed the brother up the path, he began looking at the outside of this home. He saw a CREAM COLORED CADILLAC in the driveway. He stared at the car. Why would anyone with a car like that call SVdP for help?**

**The woman opened the door, but Mike was so intent on seeing the contents of the house that he didn't see the signs of distress on her face. There was an enormous TV inside the front door. Putting that together with the late model Cadillac, he wondered: "Why would she call SVdP? She could come help me! My car is an antique and my TV would fit into my lunch bag!"**

**All of a sudden, he felt something nagging at him. Was God trying to get his attention? He tried to listen to what she was saying. She explained her situation: She had to take a leave of absence from her job because her mother was dying of cancer and needed round the clock care. Also, her husband needed emergency back surgery after being injured at work.**

**Mike's butterflies returned. This time he wasn't nervous. He was ashamed. He had been critical and judgmental instead of**

compassionate and loving. They listened to her story. Yes, SVdP would help her. A smile lit up her face. She was the picture of HOPE. What a powerful gift she gave to Mike! She was the face of CHRIST.

I identified with Mike. He could have been me!

When I was reading the scriptures for this Sunday, I noticed how active God was in the lives of the people. God was always THERE! In the Old Testament I found God paving the way for the Israelites. "See, I am doing something new. I put water in the desert for my chosen people to drink".

The Gospel story is the epitome of mercy. "Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery. What do you have to say"? And Jesus said: "Let the first one among you who is without sin throw the first stone". To the woman he said: "Has no one condemned you? God now and sin no more." I thought of Pope Francis' words when someone asked him a tricky question on an airplane and he answered: "Who am I to judge"?

It is absolutely essential for the Church and for the credibility of her message that she live and testify to mercy. God does not condemn us. We sometimes condemn ourselves. The lie in the sand of our soul can cut us off from God when we imagine we are not good enough to cross it. May each of us help the rest of us to be able to cross the line.

Sister Susanne