

Reflection: May 31, 2020 – Fr. Mark Ruiz

It was one year ago that I was ordained to the priesthood. It's somewhat difficult to articulate how I felt on that awesome Friday evening in downtown Oakland at the Cathedral of Christ the Light. It was surreal. The ritual. The music. The people. However, in the midst of all of this, I was deeply aware of the presence of the Holy Spirit! It was a grace-filled moment.

It was around this same time that I received a call from the Diocese informing me that I was being assigned to St. Joseph/Old Mission San Jose. Wow! Who would have thought? A boy from the San Antonio barrio of East Oakland missioned to the beautiful, palm tree lined Mission Hill neighborhood of Fremont, California. Home of the historic Mission San Jose, the Dominican Sisters and the Sisters of the Holy Family. It is great being here. I appreciate the warm, welcoming and generous spirit of my St. Joseph community. I look forward to the day when we can gather together again in worship and fellowship. That day will come. In the meantime, be assured of my prayers.

*"As the Father has sent me, so I send you."* (John 20:21) I do not take these words lightly. I thank God for calling me to this way of life. I love my priestly life and ministry. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve. I also understand the seriousness of the ministry that I undertake.

The Feast of Pentecost, which we celebrate today also marks the birth of the Church. This is a perfect time to open our hearts and discern how we can live out the words of our parish prayer: *"Oh Lord, you are the potter..."* I also think it is important, especially at this time, to remind ourselves of these words in the prayer: *"...mindful that the spirit, not the structure is the essence of the design."*

Peace,

Fr. Mark