The model of discipleship exemplified by Zacchaeus in today’s Gospel offers many rich insights that can assist us in fostering discipleship both as individuals and as a faith community.

There is a three way path in Zacchaeus’ encounter with Jesus:

ENCOUNTER-CONVERSION-MISSION

Zacchaeus has become a missionary entrusted to witness the salvation Jesus has poured out into his life, he runs to encounter Jesus! As we contemplate Zacchaeus’ encounter with Christ, perhaps we can ask ourselves: Is our encounter with Christ an experience that sends us on mission? What gifts has the Lord given you that can become the means for you to follow Jesus more closely in the Christian way?

In today’s Gospel we see Zacchaeus as an example of Christian life that can be associated with our Annual Catholic Appeal theme “Living our Mission of Charity”. As he converts his heart to the Lord, we see in Zacchaeus an attitude of CHARITY.

When Zacchaeus encountered Jesus we can also see in him a great sense of GRATITUDE. Precisely this is the inspiration of this year’s ACA theme: “Living our Mission of Charity” it comes from a grateful heart knowing the many blessings God has bestowed upon us in times of glory and in times of darkness.

This weekend both as individuals and as a community we will make our pledge for our Annual Catholic Appeal. As we prepare to take this commitment of charity let us prepare our hearts knowing that we cannot love beyond our capacity but by God’s grace. We know that our ACA is
not only a fundraising but a striving act of charity that will lead us to accomplish God’s mission in our diocese.

May we experience the joy Zacchaeus has experienced – the joy that charity generates in loving both God and neighbor. This is what a grateful heart generates; more joy in giving than in receiving; a joy not comparable with anything else; it cannot be tarnished because it comes from God. This joy grows from the love of God; there is not room for sadness because joy is charity’s effect, it is something that needs to be cultivated and lived out not just an unwilled effect.

May we experience the peace Zacchaeus has experienced – calm that flows from God. Peace is positive, it is the internal harmony striving toward the common good; charity empowers it; a true peace flows from participation of inner life of God. Peace means being in the deepest unity of friendship with God.

May we experience the mercy that Zacchaeus has experienced – mercy allows generosity and forgiveness, this is a virtue that can be cultivated; that’s why we have feelings about the misery of others and we act, this is real virtue that comes from God.

A real act of charity is out giving. Thus we can see it in everyday life in external acts. When you love you want the good of the other and undertake acts for others; God can use our gifts to show his love to our brothers and sisters, especially with the poor such as Zacchaeus has done. This is the meaning of our Annual Catholic Appeal to support the mission of the Church giving the best of ourselves. Our charity builds community, a fraternal communion in Jesus Christ among all the faithful in our diocese.

Thank you for living our mission of charity!

**PART 2 – THE ASK**

Today, is one of our important diocesan collections – The Annual Catholic Appeal “Pledge Weekend.” Please joining me in praying the Annual Catholic Appeal prayer. The prayer is on the Annual Catholic Appeal envelope which is located in the pew.
Now, please open the envelope: You will find three items in the envelope.

1. Pledge Card in English
2. Pledge Card in Spanish
3. ACA Information Sheet

For those with a smartphone and who want to give electronically go to www.yakimadiocese.org. Follow the instructions on the inside flap of the envelope to donate electronically today.

Let us walk through the pledge commitment card and complete it together.

Now let us pull out the pledge commitment form. Please make sure you print clearly.

Please indicate if you prefer to receive your reminder statements via Mail or Email.

It is important that you complete the pledge commitment card today. In a few moments, I will ask you to bring them to the front and offer a blessing for each of your commitments.

Let us go back to the pledge commitment card. Please indicate on the pledge card the amount you will include today. Please remember if you are not including an amount today, it is okay simply mark the “AMOUNT ENCLOSED” box with a zero “0.”

If you are using your credit card, debit card, and or electronic fund transfer, please complete the backside of the pledge commitment card. Again, please remember to print clearly and complete all the information.

It is important for you to provide an active phone number on the front side of the pledge card in case we have any questions.

I have almost completed my pledge commitment card. How are you coming along?

I will give a couple more minutes to complete your pledge card.

Please come to the front and place your envelope in the basket.

Priest offer a blessing.

Thank you for your commitment!