



# Cathedral Basilica of Our Lady of Peace

Cathedral of the Honolulu Diocese • Founded 1843 • National Historic Register

## 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

February 1, 2025

Beloved Disciples of Christ,

Greetings of peace, love, joy, and hope!

### *“Heaven’s Promise in a Culture of Achievement”*

We live in a time shaped by a “reward” mentality. Many people work tirelessly, hoping that one day their efforts will secure comfort, stability, and the freedom to enjoy life. There is goodness in this desire. Hard work is honorable, and it is right to appreciate the fruits of one’s labor. Everyone longs to feel fulfilled, to know that their efforts mean something.

Yet even as this mindset surrounds us, there is a deeper, more lasting reward than anything we can earn or accumulate. It comes when we recognize that the gifts God has placed in our hands are meant not only for our satisfaction but also for the good of our souls. Material things can certainly bring moments of happiness, but spiritual things, grace, mercy, compassion, and holiness bring a joy that endures.

Jesus invites His disciples into this deeper joy. On the mountain, He turns the world’s understanding of “reward” upside down. He teaches us that true blessedness is not measured by success, comfort, or recognition, but by the posture of our hearts. The poor in spirit, the sorrowing, the meek, the seekers of justice, the merciful, the pure of heart, the peacemakers, and the persecuted, these are the ones who receive the greatest reward, not from the world, but from God Himself. Their happiness is not fleeting; it is eternal.

Living the Beatitudes is not easy, especially in a culture that prizes achievement, independence, and self-promotion. Yet the call is for everyone. It requires faith, courage, and a deep love for Jesus. We know it is possible because we have seen it lived. The saints show us the way, especially our own Saint Damien and Saint Marianne. They poured out their lives for the forgotten, the sick, the poor, and those longing for God’s mercy. Their reward is not found in earthly praise but in the fullness of God’s presence.

If we choose to live for God and remain faithful to Him, we can trust that our labor, whether seen or unseen, celebrated or unnoticed, will lead us to the reward that truly matters. Heaven is not a distant dream, but the promise held out to those who walk in the way of Christ.

Be blessed and be a blessing to all.

Your Friend in Jesus,

Fr. Pascual