

The Least Among Us

Feast of Christ the King – Matthew 25: 31-46- November 26, 2017

We have come full circle in our liturgical year. The Evangelist, Matthew, has given us a portrait of Jesus over these past 52 weeks. We have anticipated Jesus' birth, walked through the stories of His ministry. We have heard of His passion, death and resurrection. Throughout this year we have celebrated the Mystery which is Christ. Today we celebrate what Jesus taught us. That lesson calls us to minister to the least among us.

Today we come to rest on the great feast of Christ the King. This feast celebrates what it means to be a Christian. Our God and King came to earth to teach us what it means to be truly human in the fullest and deepest sense of our faith. We believe that God humbled himself, taking on our human form with all of the joys, sorrows and challenges of this world, including death. He became the least so that we might, through His example, become His disciples, responding in love to all, especially those who are the most marginalized.

This feast also calls us to subject ourselves to "the King". We as humans don't always warm to the notion of subjecting ourselves to anything. We live and breathe a freedom that sometimes recoils from the concept of being subordinate to someone else. It happened in the Garden of Eden with Adam and Eve. This isn't the easiest lesson to learn as it has to do with subjecting ourselves to the disciplines of discipleship, which includes understanding that God is Lord over our life. It calls us to remember that anything we do comes to us through the grace of God, not of our own power or action. This is the Christian in full form, responding to the grace of God in a sacrificial way to others. Done, correctly it is like breathing, we aren't aware of the action as it is not self-serving.

In the gospel today Jesus says, **"For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me."** The righteous respond, in an amazed tone, **"Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you?"** Jesus' response is simple, **"Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of the least brothers of mine, you did for me."**

This feast is a challenge as it speaks of the final judgment and the reality of where we will spend eternal life. It is a difficult teaching, especially if we find ourselves in the position of not responding to the needs of others who ask the King, **"Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or ill or in prison, and not minister to your needs?"** God's answer is simple, **"Amen, I say to you what you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for me."**

The Christian faith believes that God will judge each one of us in how we responded to Him with our life. In giving God glory throughout our earthly sojourn, proclaiming Christ while responding to the least among us, we can look toward the day we will give God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, eternal glory in heaven.

Blessings!

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