

Homily – Christ the King

Today, the last Sunday the church calendar year, we celebrate the Feast of Christ the King, Normally I would spend time reflecting on discipleship. But this weekend at St. Louis (in this area of the parish) we have a child (Lily Lagan) making her first communion today. So I need to say Lily that your special day of receiving the Lord in the Eucharist has me considering the relationship between Christ the King and the Eucharist.

The first thing I want to consider is the establishment of the Eucharist itself. I two that during the Easter weekend we may think of the cross or the resurrection or even the Easter Bunny if we are a young person, but it is the first part of the Triduum that I want to draw attention to Holy Thursday. On Holy Thursday Jesus established the Eucharist and taught his disciples to wash each other's feet, a rather strong way of saying we are called to love one another.

When Jesus established the Eucharist he gave his disciples this gift before they faced the challenge of seeing Him crucified and then rise from the dead. One of the ways we can understand the Eucharist is it is given to us to give us the strength to live the gospel, food for the faith journey.

That certainly becomes true for me as I hear today's gospel. One line stands out "Whatever you do to another, you do to me." Think about this for a moment. Whenever we see another person we are to see Jesus. I simply put this out to you all, do you know how difficult this is? Recall a person that you would have difficulty seeing Jesus in? It should not take long and should serve as a reminder that we need to gift of the Eucharist to live the way Jesus demands.

A few years ago a group of salesmen went to a regional sales convention in Chicago. They had assured their wives that they would be home in plenty of time for Friday night's dinner. In their rush, with tickets and briefcases, one of these salesmen accidentally kicked over a table which held a display of apples. Apples flew everywhere. Without stopping or looking back, they all managed to reach the plane in time for their nearly missed boarding. *All But One!*

He paused, took a deep breath, got in touch with his feelings, and experienced a twinge of compassion for the girl whose apple stand had been overturned. He told his buddies to go on without him, waved good-bye, told one of them to call his wife when they arrived at their home destination and explain he was taking a later flight. Then he returned to the terminal where the apples were all over the terminal floor. *He was glad he did.*

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The 16 year old girl was totally blind! She was softly crying, tears running down her cheeks in frustration, and at the same time helplessly groping for her spilled produce as the crowd swirled about her, no one stopping and no one to care for her plight.

The salesman knelt on the floor with her, gathered up the apples, put them back on the table and helped organize her display. As he did this, he noticed that many of them had become battered and bruised; these he set aside in another basket. When he had finished, he pulled out his wallet and said to the girl, *‘Here, please take this \$40 for the damage we did. Are you okay?’* She nodded through her tears. He continued on with, *‘I hope we didn’t spoil your day too badly.’*

As the salesman started to walk away, the bewildered blind girl called out to him, *‘Mister...’* He paused and turned to look back into those blind eyes. She continued... *‘Are you Jesus?’*

He stopped in mid-stride, and he wondered. Then slowly he made his way to catch the later flight with that question burning and bouncing about in his soul.

That is the question today’s gospel asks us. That is the reason we celebrate the Eucharist, to be strengthened to live what we profess, to be Jesus. That’s our destiny, is it not?