

SPIRITUALITY

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Mark 11:9, 10

R⁷. Alleluia, alleluia.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!
Blessed is the kingdom of our father David that
is to come!

R⁷. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel Matt 25:31-46;
L160A

Jesus said to his disciples:

“When the Son of Man
comes in his glory,
and all the angels with him,
he will sit upon his glorious
throne,
and all the nations will be
assembled before him.

And he will separate them one
from another,
as a shepherd separates the
sheep from the goats.

He will place the sheep on his right and
the goats on his left.

Then the king will say to those on his right,
‘Come, you who are blessed by my
Father.

Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from
the foundation of the world.

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.’

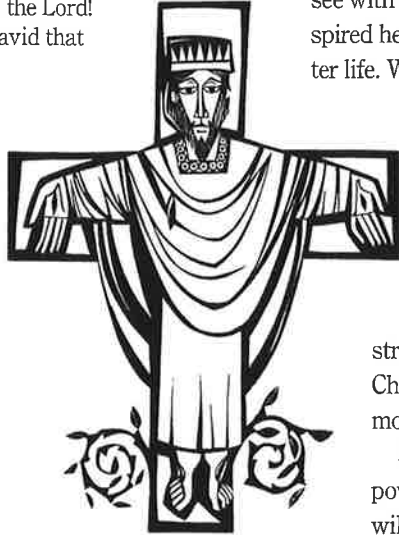
Then the righteous will answer him and
say,

‘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?’

And the king will say to them in reply,
‘Amen, I say to you, whatever you did
for one of the least brothers of mine,
you did for me.’



Reflecting on the Gospel

Seeing can be a physical activity of the eyes, or an inspired activity of the heart. We might see with our eyes the worried look of a parent caring for a sick child; our inspired heart sees love and compassion pouring out. We might see with our eyes a student struggling to get through school; our inspired heart sees potential for creativity and insight beyond book learning. We might see with our eyes the run-down condition of a neighborhood; our inspired heart sees the inner beauty of downtrodden people desiring a better life. We might see with our eyes the homeless; our inspired heart sees

hopelessness reaching out for understanding. We might see with our eyes the hungry, the thirsty, strangers, the naked, the ill, the imprisoned, the lonely, the abandoned, the elderly, the dying; our inspired heart sees the Person of Christ our King in each of them crying out to be touched by the Person of Christ our King who dwells within each of us. This gospel and solemnity invites us to draw on the

strength of the Christ who dwells within us to reach out to the Christ in the other. This gospel is about future judgment; it is even more about present discipleship.

So much about this gospel speaks to us of Christ's glory and power (“When the Son of Man comes in his glory,” “all the nations will be assembled before him,” “king will say”) and rightfully it should. However, there is a remarkable surprise in the gospel. Christ is victorious, to be sure; he is King enthroned, to be sure; he judges

all nations, to be sure. The surprise is that on this festival honoring Christ the King both the gospel and the first reading speak about others who need our help and caring for them. We honor Christ the King by acknowledging that he is in the other and within us. No greater honor can we give our Savior-King than to serve him in one another. In a sense, then, our focus on each other is really a focus on Christ—for it is a measure of how much we imitate his care for others. It is a measure of how much we are his faithful disciples. He showed us by his very life how to care for others. So must we spend our lives in this way.

Christ the King *will* come “in his glory.” It is not “if” he will come, but “when.” There is an imperative in the immediacy of this “when.” The gospel claim is clear: Christ the King, arrayed in all his glory, is present *now* in the other. We must look beyond what we see with our eyes and see with the heart of Christ; we must see others as he sees them. His throne is the person of the other; he dwells within them. The “when” of his coming is now. The kingdom of God is now. The judgment is now. In our care for others here and now, Christ the King reigns.

Living the Paschal Mystery

One of the best ways we can begin to see the Christ in the other is by not judging the negative aspects of their persons first, but instead looking for the good in the other. This can be carried out in such a simple Christian practice as seeking always to compliment rather than to criticize another. Care that we don't spread gossip is another way. Thus do we build up the Body of Christ and bring honor to Christ our King who dwells in ourselves and the other. Thus do we see the face of Christ our King in everyone we meet. Perhaps the first and most important task of being good subjects of Christ the King is to live as he did—not simply seeing with the eyes, but seeing with hearts responding to the dignity of others, to their need for healing, forgiveness, reconciliation, compassion, mercy, love.

Continued in Appendix A, p. 301.

Focusing the Gospel

Key words and phrases: When the Son of Man comes in his glory, Inherit the kingdom, whatever you did . . . you did for me

To the point: Christ the King *will* come “in his glory.” It is not “if” he will come, but “when.” There is an imperative in the immediacy of this “when.” The gospel claim is clear: Christ the King, arrayed in all his glory, is present *now* in the other. His throne is the person of the other. The “when” is now. The kingdom of God is now. The judgment is now. In our care for others here and now, Christ the King reigns.

Connecting the Gospel

to the first reading: The first reading details all the caring and compassionate ways our shepherd God has acted toward us. The one who has shepherded us toward the Day of Judgment (see first reading) demands only that we have also shepherded one another (gospel).

to experience: How different our response to others might be if we looked upon them and saw Christ the King!

Connecting the Responsorial Psalm

to the readings: In the first reading and psalm God shepherds us by nurturing, healing, tending, and feeding. In the gospel Christ shepherds us by judging and sorting. In the first scenario God cares for us, in the second Christ holds us accountable for caring for one another. We are not merely sheep; we are also to be shepherds to others in need. We are to seek the lost, bind up the wounded, heal the sick, give drink to the thirsty, feed the hungry, clothe the naked because, Psalm 23 reminds us, God has been doing this for us.

Two things will happen on that Day of Judgment. Whether we knew it or not, we will discover that the needy to whom we reached out were Christ (gospel). And whether we knew it or not, we will discover that with Christ we have conquered death (second reading). In caring for our brothers and sisters we will have been shepherded to the fullness of Life. Has this not been the whole purpose of our journey through this, another liturgical year, when the whole mystery of Christ is revealed not only to us, but also in us? What more could we want on this day when we acclaim Christ as our King and conclude another year of faithful discipleship?

to psalmist preparation: Our shepherd God is continually leading you to a new way of being and relating. Where has this journey taken you during this past liturgical year? Has it been easy to follow, or hard? What has helped you? What has hindered you? What graces and growths has God given you along the way?

ASSEMBLY & FAITH-SHARING GROUPS

- When I take time to reflect on Christ coming in all his glory, I am moved to . . .
- It is easiest to see the person of Christ in others when . . .
- The person in my life I need to be more attentive to is . . .

PRESIDERS

The readings reveal Christ as Shepherd, King, and Judge. Of these three my ministry is most like . . . because . . . and least like . . . because . . .

DEACONS

The “scattered” sheep (see first reading) that I sometimes avoid or neglect are . . . ; ways I could improve my tending to their needs are . . .

HOSPITALITY MINISTERS

My hospitality toward those assembling for liturgy helps me reach out to the “least” I meet in my daily living by . . .

MUSIC MINISTERS

One way I have grown in my ability to see Christ in others with whom I share music ministry is . . . When I see Christ in other music ministers, my ministry becomes . . .

ALTAR MINISTERS

When I put my whole heart into serving, I hear Christ the King say to me, “Come, you . . . blessed,” and so . . .

LECTORS

When I allow Christ the King to shepherd me during my preparation of the word, my proclamation becomes . . .

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS

Gospel (cont.)

Matt 25:31-46; L160A

Then he will say to those on his left,
 ‘Depart from me, you accursed,
 into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his ange
 For I was hungry and you gave me no food,
 I was thirsty and you gave me no drink,
 a stranger and you gave me no welcome,
 naked and you gave me no clothing,
 ill and in prison, and you did not care for me.’
 Then they will answer and say,
 ‘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?’
 He will answer them, ‘Amen, I say to you,
 what you did not do for one of these least ones,
 you did not do for me.’
 And these will go off to eternal punishment,
 but the righteous to eternal life.”