

November 22, 2020: Solemnity of Christ the King

Prayer

fully alive

Lectio Divina Aid

encounter, follow
and respond

Matthew 25:31-46

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.' Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you accursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. 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."

first movement Evangelization to encounter

Evangelization is an encounter with the living God. In fact, it is through the Divine encounter that we become fully alive. “The ultimate goal is not health or wellness, but the encounter with Jesus ... He alone frees us from evil and heals our hearts. Only an encounter with him can save, can make life full and beautiful” (Pope Francis, Homily on the Occasion of the Canonization of St. John Henry Newman, 13 October 2019).

Questions to assist your encounter with the Lord

- Jesus coming in glory, with all his angels and seated on a throne is a vivid image of His Kingship. Take a couple of minutes to picture yourself in the midst of this image. How do you experience Jesus in this moment of prayer? What do you feel and experience in your heart?
- Notice Jesus turns to you and says, “Come, you who are blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” What is your reaction to this kind invitation?

Personal Notes and Insights:

“We must learn to recognize Christ when he comes out to meet us in our brothers, the people around us. No human life is ever isolated. It is bound up with other lives. No man or woman is a single verse; we all make up one divine poem which God writes with the cooperation of our freedom.” St. Escriva, *Christ is passing by*.

(If in a group, spend 2-5 minutes discussing your responses.)

second movement

Discipleship

to follow

In Discipleship we respond, *fiat*, to his challenging yet loving invitation. St. John Paul II wrote “ ...Mary as Mother became the first ‘disciple’ of her Son, the first to whom he seemed to say: ‘Follow me...’”

Questions to help you prayerfully hear what he is invited you to

- A sheep hears the shepherd’s voice and follows him. Sheep are a symbol of faithful discipleship. Take a moment of prayer and reflect how this past week you faithfully heard Jesus’ voice and followed him, especially in helping another. Offer a prayer of thanksgiving.
- Goats are a symbol of wicked actions and disobedience. Reflect on the times you were disobedient to God, omitting the good actions He was prompting you to give to another. Say a prayer seeking forgiveness.

Personal Notes and Insights:

And be certain that, the farther advanced you find you are in this, the greater the love you will have for God; for so dearly does his Majesty love us that he will reward our love for our neighbor by increasing the love which we bear to himself, and that in a thousand ways: this I cannot doubt” (St. Teresa of Avila, *Interior Castle*, V, 3)

(If in a group, spend 2-5 minutes discussing your responses.)

third movement Stewardship to respond

Stewardship is the grateful *response* of a Christian *disciple* who recognizes and receives God's gifts and shares these gifts in love of God and neighbor. "We do well also to remember that the process of Lectio Divina is not concluded until it arrives at action (*actio*), which moves the believer to make his or her life a gift for others in charity" (Pope Benedict XVI).

Questions to help you discern your "grateful response"

- Everything we have material and spiritual is a gift from God and is meant to be shared in love of God and neighbor. Think of some of those gifts and how God is calling you to share one of those gifts with another.
- What a corporal or spiritual work of mercy is God prompting your heart to action? Seek to follow those promptings as a "grateful response" for the benefit of another. (Listed below)

Corporal Works: To feed the hungry; To give drink to the thirsty; To clothe the naked; To shelter the homeless; To visit the sick; To ransom the captive; To bury the dead.

Spiritual Works: To instruct the ignorant; To counsel the doubtful; To admonish sinners; To bear wrongs patiently; To forgive offenses willingly; To comfort the afflicted; To pray for the living and the dead.

Personal Notes and Insights:

"Today there is an inescapable duty to make ourselves the neighbor of every man, no matter who he is, and if we meet him, to come to his aid in a positive way, whether he is an aged person abandoned by all, a foreign worker despised without reason, a refugee, an illegitimate child wrongly suffering for a sin he did not commit, or a starving human being who awakens our conscience...(Gaudium et spes, 27)

(If in a group, spend 2-5 minutes discussing your responses.)