

Christ the King (Year A)

Matthew 25:31–46

‘He will sit on his glorious throne and he will separate people one from another.’

At that time: Jesus said to his disciples, ‘When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the 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, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.” Then the righteous will answer him, saying, “Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?” And the King will answer them, “Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you did it to me.”

‘Then he will say to those on his left, “Depart from me, you cursed, 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, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.” Then they also will answer, saying, “Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?” Then he will answer them, saying, “Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.” And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.’

Reflection

In this Gospel, Jesus gives us a really clear challenge: how we treat other people matters. He tells us that when we feed someone who is hungry, welcome someone who feels like a stranger, visit someone who is lonely or care for someone who is struggling, we are doing those things for him.

What makes this challenging is that Jesus isn’t only talking about big, dramatic acts of kindness. He is talking about ordinary things – noticing someone who is on their own, sitting with someone who is struggling, listening when someone needs to talk, or making sure someone feels welcome.

This is at the heart of Youth SVP. St Vincent de Paul taught that we should see Christ in the people we meet, especially those who are struggling or overlooked. We don’t always need to do something huge. Sometimes we simply need to notice.

The people around us might be carrying things we know nothing about. So the question for us is: Who might need me to notice them today?

Materials needed

Christmas cards and pens

Activity

As we prepare for the start of Advent, spend some time writing Christmas cards for people in your community who may sometimes be overlooked.

They could be delivered to:

- Local care homes, hospices, or hospitals
- Families supported by SVP conferences (your local conference could distribute)
- Individuals who live alone or are socially isolated
- The homeless (perhaps you could ask your local homeless shelter to hand them out)

Once you have written your cards, make a plan of how these could be distributed throughout advent.

Call to Action

Christ the King calls us to serve not from a throne, but among those who are often unseen or forgotten. This week, notice someone who might be overlooked– an elderly neighbour, a lonely classmate, or a family in need. Reach out with kindness, a note, or a small act of care, and let Christ’s love shine through you.

