

“Not as man sees does God see...The Lord looks into the heart.”

The Lord sent the prophet Samuel to anoint the king of Israel, from among the sons of Jesse. Samuel saw Jesse’s elder son Eliab and thought, “Surely, the Lord’s anointed is here.” Eliab looked like Denzel Washington. Then Samuel saw the other, older sons. And the prophet thought, ‘The Lord surely must have chosen one of these!’ Jesse’s other older sons looked like Pierce Brosnan, LeBron James, Eric Estrada, Tom Brady, Raul Julia, and Charleton Heston, respectively. But the Lord had chosen none of them, because God Almighty does not judge by appearances. He perceives things by a deeper, more penetrating light.

We just heard the Lord Jesus declare: “I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see might see.”

Pope Francis gave us an encyclical letter on faith. He wrote:

“Those who believe, see. They see with a light that illumines their entire journey, for it comes from the risen Christ, the Morning Star that never sets.”

Now, who knows where that phrase comes from? “The Morning Star that never sets?” Right! From the hymn at the beginning of the Easter Vigil. Three weeks from now.

When Pope Francis claims that “those who believe, see,” he means, and I quote:

“Our faith in the Son of God made man in Jesus of Nazareth enables us to grasp reality’s deepest meaning and to see how much God loves this world and is constantly guiding it towards himself.”

Without faith, we can see the television. We can see the other human beings quarantined nearby. We can even see beautiful sunsets.

But we need faith to see the wisdom that guides it all, sustains it all, moves it all towards a goal. Without faith, we cannot see the fact that all the things we see are moving towards an as-yet-unseen fulfillment.

Jesus Christ—His whole pilgrimage, from the Virgin’s womb, through 33 years, to his final trip to Jerusalem; His death; His resurrection; His ascension—all of this, Jesus Christ’s life as a human being: the Good News about it reaches us as both A. a promise about the meaning of life and B. the fulfillment of the promise.

A. Christ offers us the promise of eternal bliss. He said, ‘In My Father’s house there are many dwelling places, and I have prepared one for you.’ His resurrection from the dead makes that promise shine like an as-yet-invisible light—and that promise--that light--becomes the interior light of our lives.

B. Christ fulfills the promise, too—because He Himself gives us all the divine gifts that make our life of faith possible; He pours out the Holy Spirit. Christ's grace, Christ's life flows into our souls through the sacraments we have received. He is alive. He is at work. And He Himself awaits us at the end of time. Jesus Christ: the true, just, and loving conclusion of everything.

“Awake, o sleeper,” therefore, “rise from the dead, and Christ will give you light.”

Yes, it's true: we don't even know what He looks like. Does Jesus look like Ryan Gosling? Johnny Legend? Does He look like Abraham Lincoln, only shorter? We don't know what Christ's Holy Face looks like, up there in heaven.

But, even though we cannot now see His face, and we don't have any photographs or Facebook-Live videos of Jesus Christ—even though the whole thing is an experience of pure faith: the light that shines from Christ's face in heaven enlightens our minds. Not so that we can see what He looks like, but so that we can see the world the way that He sees it.

He sees everything from one particular point-of-view. Namely: The point-of-view of the eternal Son of the eternal Father. He experiences everything as the chosen and beloved heir of the divine throne--the heir to whom God wills to give

everything. Christ receives it all, as the gift that it is. And He offers it back to the Father as a sacrifice of love, to give His Father glory.

By faith, dear brothers and sisters, we participate in this, through thick and thin.