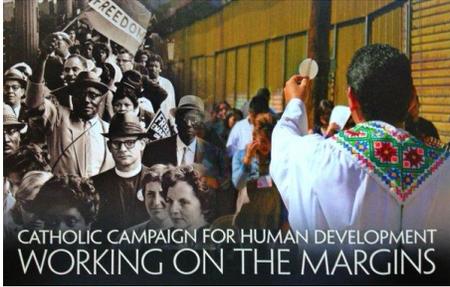


NOT TO BE SERVED BUT TO SERVE



The Gospel reading for the Feast of Christ the King describes an unusual view of kingship. Hanging from a cross, stripped and beaten, Christ the King is a different kind of king. Instead of paying Jesus homage, rulers and soldiers sneer and jeer at “the King of the Jews.”

This is the Christ the King that we celebrate today: a king who came not to be served but to serve. A king who opens his kingdom to the poor and vulnerable. A king who follows God’s will, not his own.

David also followed God’s will, not his own. We see this in the first reading when all the tribes of Israel came to David to anoint him king of Israel because he ruled according to God’s will.

God’s will is to serve, not to be served. God desires mercy, not sacrifice (Matthew 9:13).

One important way that we participate in Christ’s kingdom of service is by caring for the poor. The Catholic Campaign for Human Development is the U.S. Bishops’ program for addressing the root causes of poverty in our country. Now in its fifth decade, CCHD has funded hundreds of projects in the Church of Western Oregon that empower the poor to come together and solve *their* community problems. CCHD funds projects that produce real and lasting change. The collection to fund this Campaign is November 19 and 20.

One important way that we can be merciful is by participating in the Catholic Campaign for Human Development. CCHD is a living example of the Corporal Works of Mercy: CCHD works to break the cycle of poverty by helping low-income people participate in decisions that affect their lives, families and communities.

The Jubilee Year of Mercy concludes on Sunday, November 20, 2016 with the Closing of the Holy Door of St. Peter’s Basilica. Though the Holy Doors of the Jubilee close, the doors of our hearts remain open to mercy. Let us continue this mercy by generously supporting the collection for the Catholic Campaign for Human Development.

We live lives of mercy and service for no other reason than Jesus Christ is the center of our lives. St. Paul writes that Jesus is the firstborn of all creation and that in him were created all things in heaven and on earth.

Pope Francis commented on this passage by saying: “Jesus is the center of creation; and so the attitude demanded of us as true believers is that of recognizing and accepting in our lives the centrality of Jesus Christ, in our thoughts, in our words and in our works. And so our thoughts will be Christian thoughts, thoughts of Christ. Our works will be Christian works, works of Christ; and our words will be Christian words, words of Christ” (*Homily on Solemnity of Christ the King, November 24, 2013*).

“Our works will be Christian works, works of Christ.” In prayer, let us remember that we come from a place of service and mercy:

For the ministries of the Church that show God’s mercy in the world,
especially the Catholic Campaign for Human Development:

That they would enjoy the freedom to heal the sick,
feed the hungry,
clothe the naked,
visit those in prison,
and build up the wellbeing of our communities.
We pray to the Lord.

U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops

(Readings for The Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe)



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