

*Thus says the Lord GOD: I myself will look after and tend my sheep.
As a shepherd tends his flock...so will I tend my sheep.*

Brothers and sisters, today is the last Sunday of the Church year, the Solemnity of Christ our King of the universe. When we hear of this title King, what comes to mind is the human kings that we know. Ezekiel is says that God would send a shepherd, a leader(Christ) who will tend his sheep and lead them to eternal life. Jesus is our king, the good shepherd whose throne is the cross, his crown was made of thorns. He loved and cared for people, he cares about us so much that he gave his life for us to redeem us, that anyone who listens and believes in him may one day enter in paradise with him like the repentant thief. Even today, he continues to forgive, he heals, he comforts those who come to him, he shepherds the whole world.

Last Sunday we heard of the master who gave talents to his servants and promised to return to hold them accountable. That master is Jesus Christ himself who, after his resurrection, ascended back to the Father to sit at His right hand. But before he ascended, he sent us to preach his good news, to proclaim his kingdom here on earth, kingdom of love, peace and mercy. He gave us these valuable gifts of love and mercy that we may share with all as per our abilities. To the servants who share their gifts with others and bear fruit, the master will say, *well done my good and faithful servant, since you were trustworthy in small matters, Now come share your master's joy.*

The gospel of today(Mathew 25) is the continuation of last week's and Jesus truly shows us why sharing our gifts is worth it. Why should we care to share our gifts and talents, why should we show love and mercy to others? Jesus is pictured in this gospel as a judge who will judge us on the last day on how we showed mercy and love to the least of his brothers and sisters, the needy. Our first reading gives us an image of a king who is a shepherd, who cares and serves. All of us are called to be keepers of our brothers and sisters. Indifference and selfishness are not Christlike, they are not Christian virtues. Like Christ, we are called to be shepherds of one another. Let us look out for the good of one another, care for our family members, fellow parishioners, our neighbors. Whatever we do to these, we do to Christ himself. Jesus wants us to see him in every person especially the sick, the unborn, the suffering, the poor, the elderly, the despised. In our prayers, let us never forget to pray for them, yes, even for those who are battling coronavirus in various hospitals around the world. Let us be missionaries of love and mercy, people who follow Christ's way.

I find it encouraging that one day, when we make it to heaven, we will find it to be a very happy place. We can see the kind of people that God invites to heaven-people who care about others, who are merciful and caring toward others not people who *only care about themselves*. Just think of Mother Teresa, or any other saint. Let us therefore ask our mother Mary to pray for us that following the example of Christ the Shepherd, the caring servant of all, we his disciples, may also strive to show love and mercy to one another in our little ways. One day when we come before this good judge, He will

tell us: *Come, you who are blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.* Happy thanksgiving. Remember we have two masses for thanksgiving, one the day before thanksgiving and Thursday.

Have a blessed and fruitful Advent!

Buona Domenica.

Fr. Chrispine