

Homily
20th Wednesday of Ordinary Time I 2001
Queenship of Mary
Judges 9:6-15, Psalm 21:2-7, Matthew 20:1-16a

Today is the Octave of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. With her example and today's readings we can glimpse the truth about royalty, power, arrogance and humility.

In Judges is the parable of the trees. The fine trees are content in producing their good. The last, the buckthorn, is a bramble with no good qualities. The buckthorn seizes the opportunity for dominion and commands the rest to "take refuge in his shadow" or risk his devouring fire.

Jotham warned of the same should Shechem make Abimelech king. Of course, the people did anyways and in the end, they were rewarded with slaughter. They sought a focus for position and power and received what they sought.

Matthew's parable of the vine workers also speaks towards arrogance, power, who deserves what, who is first and last. Judges showed what people get when they seek the wrong goal. Jesus' answer is to reward humble faith and loyalty with extravagance. His fairness was not in an equitable hourly wage. His fairness was to fulfill the needs of each as they were. It is all Jesus' gift.

As we honor and recognize Mary in her Queenship today, we see our Mother rewarded with regal honor. The reward is a reflection of her humility, compassion and self-less willingness to be open and to act with God in our salvation.

C.S. Lewis wrote the Great Divorce, a fanciful bus journey from Earth to Hell and then to Heaven. In a Heaven scene, our tourist observed a royal procession with a beautiful woman on a royal steed. Throngs of people were dancing and singing her praises. The tourist asked his guide who that wonderful woman was. The guide replied that she was a mother, just a mother, just another self-less mother.

May we all be just another self-less mother, father, daughter, son, sister, brother to the world, to act with God in creation's salvation.