

## CHRIST THE KING

*Ezekiel 34:11-12; 1 Corinthians 15:20-26,28; Matthew 25:31-46*

### HOMILY

On this last Sunday of the Liturgical Year we celebrate the feast of Jesus Christ our King where we are presented with two kinds of people coming for judgement, described respectively as 'sheep' and 'goats', the good guys and the bad guys.

The good guys are rewarded for actions done to Jesus:

*"In so far as you did this to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me."* The bad guys are condemned not for actions which were morally wrong but for not doing anything at all TO Jesus: *"In so far as you neglected to do this to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you neglected to do it to me."*

To sum up, Jesus is saying that, if you wish to be counted among the sheep, the things you are asked to do are so simple:

give food and drink to 'Jesus' in those who are hungry and thirsty,

clothe 'Jesus' in those who are naked,

visit 'Jesus' in those who are sick and in jail.

Whether we realise it or not, every time we spontaneously take care of a brother or sister in need it is Jesus himself we are serving. This is the way God loves me. It is not enough just to fulfil obligations, religious or otherwise.

On visiting the sick it does not matter how they got sick (*acquiring AIDS through a promiscuous lifestyle*). It does not matter why they are in prison (*murder, rape of a young girl, terrorism...*).

These people are especially to be loved because they are the most in need of having their lives turned round.

This parable of the sheep and the goats is not so much information about what will happen at the end of time. It is about opening my eyes here and now to the needs of my neighbour

The story does not use fancy words about justice and solidarity, but speaks of food, clothing, something to drink, protection from elements.

It doesn't recommend "love" but specific actions like giving, welcoming, visiting, taking care of. What matters is not a theoretical love but compassion that helps the person in need.

The parable has a simple message: ***'Minister to the needy around you, else you are missing the whole point of living!'***