

Homily

03.11.2019 – Monday – Lenten Weekday (I)

Lv 19:1-2, 11-18 Mt 25:31-46



Who is that “least brother?” It’s interesting that Jesus specifically points to the person considered the least, as opposed to a more general statement that includes all people. Why not say, “Whatever you do to others...?” This would include all whom we serve. But instead Jesus pointed to the least brother. Perhaps this should be seen, especially, as the most sinful person, the weakest, the most gravely ill, the incapacitated, the hungry and the homeless, and all those who have pronounced needs in this life, all those who are in shadows.

The most beautiful and touching part about this statement is that Jesus identifies Himself with the person in need, the “least” of all. By serving those in special need, we are serving Jesus. But for Him to be able to say that, He has to be intimately united with these people. And by showing such an intimate connection to them, Jesus reveals their infinite dignity as persons.

This is such an important point to grasp! An invitation, from the Church Father, to constant focus upon the dignity and value of the person must be the central message we take from this passage. This may be an reflective point during Lent.

Reflect, today, upon the dignity of each and every person. Try to call to mind anyone you may fail to look at with perfect respect. Who is it you look down upon and roll your eyes at? Who is it you judge or disdain?

Again, the parable of the goats and sheep has a similar endpoint as the parable of the rich man who refused to give any help to the poor man Lazarus who begged daily at the rich man's doorstep (Luke 16:19-31). Although Lazarus was poor and lacked what he needed, he nonetheless put his hope in God and the promise of everlasting life in God's kingdom. The rich man was a lover of wealth rather than a lover of God and neighbor.

The day of God's righteous judgment will disclose which kind of love we chose in this present life - a holy unselfish love directed to God and to the welfare of our neighbor or a disordered and selfish love that puts oneself above God and the good of our neighbor.

Let us pray:

Lord Jesus, I do understand and believe that You are present, in hidden form, in the weakest of the weak, the poorest of the poor and in the sinner in our midst. Help me to diligently seek and serve You out in each and every person I encounter, especially those in most need. May your love rule in my heart that I may only think, act, and speak with charity and good will for all.

Jesus, I trust in You.