

**FEAST OF CHRIST THE KING
NOVEMBER 20, 2016**

THERE WAS ONCE A KING WHO HAD NO SON AND LONGED FOR AN HEIR WHO WOULD SUCCEED HIM TO THE THRONE.

SO HE POSTED A NOTICE, INVITING YOUNG MEN TO APPLY TO BE CONSIDERED FOR ADOPTION INTO HIS FAMILY, TO BECOME HIS HEIR.

ALL THAT HE ASKED OF THE APPLICANTS WAS THAT THEY SHOULD LOVE GOD AND LOVE THEIR NEIGHBOR.

A POOR PEASANT BOY SAW THE NOTICE, BUT HE THOUGHT THAT HE WOULD HAVE NO CHANCE OF BEING ADOPTED BY THE KING BECAUSE OF THE RAGGED CLOTHES HE WORE.

SO HE WORKED BY HARD, UNTIL HE HAD JUST ENOUGH MONEY TO BUY A NEW SET OF CLOTHES. WEARING HIS NEW CLOTHES, HE THEN SET OFF TO THE ROYAL PALACE TO APPLY FOR THE POSITION OF THE KING'S ADOPTED SON.

NOW, AS HE WAS JOURNEYING TOWARDS THE PALACE, THE BOY MET A BEGGAR ON THE ROAD.

THE OLD MAN WAS SHIVERING WITH COLD, AND THE BOY FELT SORRY FOR HIM AND EXCHANGED CLOTHES WITH HIM.

AS HE WAS NOW BACK TO WEARING BEGGAR'S CLOTHES, IT HARDLY SEEMED WORTH GOING ON TOWARDS THE KING'S PALACE. HOWEVER, HAVING COME SO FAR ALREADY, THE BOY DECIDED TO KEEP GOING AND AT LEAST SEE THE KING'S PALACE FROM THE OUTSIDE.

WHEN HE ARRIVED, HE WAS GREETED BY SCORNFUL LAUGHTER AND SNEERING REMARKS FROM THE KING'S COURTIERS.

NEVERTHELESS, HE WAS FINALLY ADMITTED INTO THE PRESENCE OF THE KING.

THERE WAS SOMETHING STRANGELY FAMILIAR ABOUT THE KING.

AT FIRST, THE BOY COULDN'T FIGURE OUT WHAT IT WAS, AND WHY HE FELT SO AT HOME IN HIS PRESENCE. THEN HE REALIZED THAT KING HIMSELF WAS WEARING THE CLOTHES THAT HE HAD GIVEN TO THE OLD BEGGAR JUST A FEW HOURS AGO ALONG THE ROAD.

THE KING CAME DOWN FROM HIS THRONE AND EMBRACED THE BOY, HOLDING HIM CLOSE IN HIS ARMS....

"WELCOME, MY SON," HE SAID.

THIS FEAST OF CHRIST THE KING IS PROBABLY MORE ABOUT TRANSFORMING, TURNING UPSIDE DOWN OUR NOTION OF THE TYPE OF KING WE HAVE IN JESUS THE CHRIST- THAN ANYTHING ELSE - AND THAT STORY CAN HELP US BEGIN TO TURN OUR NOTION OF HIM AS A KING UPSIDE DOWN.....

OF COURSE, OUR GOSPEL STORY ALSO CHALLENGES US TO KEEP STRETCHING OUR NOTION OF CHRIST AS KING IN NEW DIRECTIONS WHAT KING CHOOSES AS HIS THRONE - A CROSS - UPON WHICH HE HANGS, REJECTED AND POWERLESS - MOCKED...RIDICULED? AS THE RELIGIOUS RULERS AND SOLDIERS TAUNT HIM WITH "SAVE YOURSELF AND SAVE US"?

OF COURSE, THIS KING DOESN'T SAVE HIMSELF -

*INSTEAD, AS HIS LAST ACT, HIS FINAL GIFT, AS POPE FRANCIS HAS
REMINDS US, HE EXTENDS HIS MERCY TO A CONDEMNED CRIMINAL
THAT LAST ACT OF MERCY, OF COURSE, IS CHARACTERISTIC OF HIS
ENTIRE LIFE AND MINISTRY....*

*WHAT ARE WE TO MAKE OF THIS CONVULTED WAY OF BEING A KING, OF
REVEALING SOVEREIGNTY OVER ALL BY SURRENDERING TO
POWERLESSNESS?*

*FOR AN ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION, I TURN TO AN EMAIL I RECEIVED
RECENTLY FROM BOB BUESCHER, CO-CHAIR OF OUR LITURGICAL
COMMITTEE, ALONG WITH LINDA, CONCERNING OUR LITURGY TODAY--
COMMENTING ON OUR READINGS HE WRITES THE KEY IS IN TODAY'S
SECOND READING FROM COLOSSIANS:*

*IN JUST SIX VERSES PAUL SUMS UP THE TRUE MEANING OF
SOVEREIGNTY IN THE REIGN OF CHRIST---=*

*CHRIST IS THE FIRSTBORN OF ALL CREATION AND ALL THINGS CREATED
"HOLD TOGETHER IN CHRIST"*

*CHRIST IS THE FIRSTBORN FROM THE DEAD AND SO "FIRST IN EVERY
WAY."*

GOD WANTED ALL THINGS RECONCILED THROUGH CHRIST -

*EVERYTHING IN HEAVEN AND EVERYTHING ON EARTH - WHEN CHRIST
"MADE PEACE DYING ON THE CROSS"*

I AGREE WHOLEHEARTEDLY AND THOSE SIX VERSES MAY ALSO TURN

UPSIDE DOWN OUR NOTION OF SALVATION....

MOST OF US PROBABLY GREW UP WITH THOMISTIC NOTION THAT, IF ADAM HADN'T SINNED, THE SECOND PERSON OF THE TRINITY WOULD NEVER HAD BECOME FLESH....

HOWEVER, THE 13TH CENTURY FRANCISCAN THEOLOGIANS, MOST NOTABLY BONAVENTURE AND DUNS SCOTUS BELIEVE JESUS WAS INCARNATE BEFORE ADAM AND THEREFORE BEFORE SIN.....

REMEMBER GOD DOES NOT EXIST IN TIME, GOD DOES NOT HAVE PAST OR FUTURE BUT ONLY AN ETERNAL NOW - AN ETERNAL PRESENT

RICHARD ROHR SUMS UP THIS POSITION WELL....

JESUS CHRIST DID NOT BECOME MAN TO CHANGE GOD'S MIND ABOUT US HUMANS AND OUR SINFULNESS - THE THOMISTIC NOTION

JESUS CHRIST BECAME MAN TO CHANGE OUR MIND ABOUT GOD...

LET ME REPEAT THAT.....

CHANGING OUR MIND ABOUT GOD IS WHAT THE FEAST OF CHRIST THE KING IS ABOUT....

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN CHANGING YOUR MIND ABOUT YOUR GOD?

IF SO, YOU'VE COME TO THE RIGHT PLACE ON THE RIGHT DAY!!!

CHRIST,, THE FIRST BORN OF ALL CREATION, THE ONE IN WHOSE "IMAGE AND LIKENESS" WE HAVE BEEN CREATED, HAS BECOME ONE OF US, EVEN MORE VULNERABLE, MORE POWERLESS, MERCIFUL TO THE END - IN ORDER TO EXTEND HIS LOVING HANDS IN OUR DIRECTION....

OF COURSE, THE COST OF RESPONDING TO OUR POWERLESS KING AND BELONGING TO HIS KINGDOM IS NOT INCIDENTAL...

THE COST OF FOLLOWING HIM IS CHALLENGING - THE COST IS A WILLINGNESS TO SUFFER AND DIE BY GIVING OURSELVES TO THOSE AROUND US, ESPECIALLY OUR ENEMIES.....

THE COST IS EXTENDING THE RECONCILIATION BEGUN IN CHRIST TO THE WORLD WE LIVE IN - MOST OF ALL GROWING IN MERCY - EVEN AFTER THE JUBILEE YEAR OF MERCY HAS CONCLUDED...

NO DOUBT, WE WILL CONTINUE TO HAVE OPPORTUNITIES IN OUR PERSONAL LIVES AND IN THE LIFE OF OUR COMMUNITY TO PRACTICE BOTH THE CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY AND THE SPIRITUAL WORKS OF MERCY.....

E.G. YESTERDAY - IN THE MORNING GIVING FOOD TO THE HUNGRY AND DRINK TO THE THIRSTY AND IN THE LATE AFTERNOON - BURYING THE DEAD....THANK YOU

MAY THIS JUBILEE YEAR OF MERCY BE ONLY A PLATFORM, A STARTING POINT FOR OUR GROWTH AS PEOPLE OF MERCY.....

OUR WILLINGNESS TO FOLLOW IN THE PATH OF OUR MERCIFUL AND LOVING JESUS, THE CHRIST - THE FIRST BORN OF ALL CREATION...

AN EXPRESSION OF OUR WILLINGNESS TO CHANGE OUR MIND ABOUT OUR GOD...

