

Over sixteen years ago, a heart surgeon from Ohio was looking for something more. He was a partner in a prestigious clinic, a lecturer at Notre Dame, and happily married with a lovely daughter. But something was missing.

He decided to look for answers from Mother Teresa of Calcutta. She was convalescing in Tijuana, Mexico after having a heart attack, and he went down there looking for what was missing in his life. He wanted to know God's purpose for his life, and understand just what it was that God expected from him.

And so he asked her that question. Mother Teresa asked one of her sisters to bring a Bible, and while they waited she told him that the answer to his question was the very foundation and purpose of her religious order, the Missionaries of Charity.

When the Bible came, she took it and opened it up, and lay it between them. She didn't read from it, but rather took his hand and looked deeply into his eyes.

Then she said, "Jesus said whatever you do for the least of our brothers and sisters," and touching his fingers to emphasize each word she said, "you ... did ... it ... to ... me."

She told him that God will judge us on how we loved and on how much compassion we had for our sisters and brothers.

Mother Teresa went on to tell this doctor that God will not judge us on how much money we have, or how successful we are, or titles, or power, or property. But rather on the compassion we had for others.

Today is the feast of Christ the King. For us Americans there isn't much attachment to a King. Unless maybe "Burger King" or "Alaska King Crab" or "King Sized" or "King of the Hill"

In the first reading, God prophesies through the prophet Ezekiel that he will shepherd his people, not by taking advantage of them, but by taking care of them. The image of a shepherd was often used to describe kings in the Old Testament, and this continues in the Psalm.

St. Paul talks about how at the end of time ... when every type of power and authority is removed by Christ, that Jesus will turn everything over to the Father.

And while the idea of a king is difficult for us to grasp, perhaps Christ understood this when he preached what we heard in today's Gospel.

Christ our King is sitting next to us right now. Christ our King reigns as he is walking out in the cold, hoping to catch the last bus to the homeless shelter. Christ our King reigns in the deserts of Africa in people who are starving or suffering from horrible diseases. Christ our King reigns in the lonely sick people who lie in hospitals and nursing homes.

And he has told us that whatever we do for these, the least of our brothers and sisters, we have done it for him. Let us approach this altar and in time depart this place with a new found knowledge of who we are and how we relate to our beloved and loving King, Jesus Christ.

Like Mother Teresa told that doctor, Jesus will either know us or not ... based on what we have done for the least of our brothers and sisters.

Let us ask our Lord and King to reveal himself in the last place we may expect, and when he does may we, through grace, rush to meet him ... to honor him ... to love him as he deserves ... as our King ... Christ the King.