



Church at Home

Christ the King Sunday The last Sunday before Advent

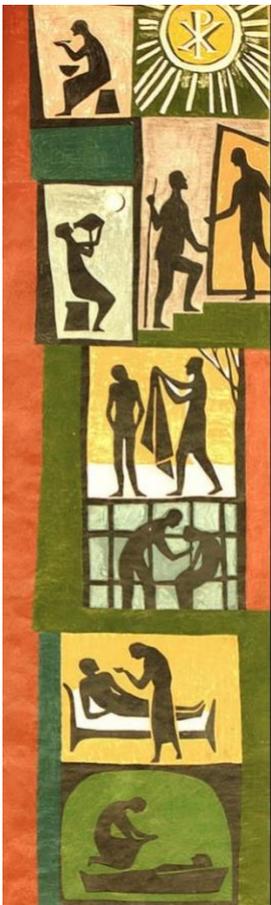
November 22nd 2020

Further resources for worship and reflection

The parable of the sheep and goats comes as the last of the three parables about the Kingdom of God told by Jesus in Holy Week. The 10 bridesmaids story challenges us to be ready...the tale of the talents urges us to do something with our gifts before it is too late ...and this parable shows us what that might look like in practice. 'Giving food and drink to those in need, welcoming the stranger, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and those in prison' are often cited as the acts of kindness that should be the hallmark of our faith. Traditionally 'burying the dead' has also been included to make it 'the 7 works of mercy', which have been the subject of many great paintings. Above is one example by Pieter Bruegel the younger.

I wonder what contemporary examples of acts of mercy you would depict in a version of this painting for today?

Two quotes from <https://reflectionsintheword.org/>



'In this parable Jesus previews mankind's appearance before God at the Judgment at the end of the world. In this glimpse into the future, Jesus makes clear that a key issue that will separate the 'saved' from the 'unsaved' is love of others. Although they are all of irrefutable importance in the church, knowledge, fervour, piety, doctrinal rectitude, etc. will not be its defining characteristic; **the defining characteristic will be love**; moreover, love in action'.

'In this story, neither the sheep nor the goats saw Jesus in the people they loved/served or didn't love/serve. But the sheep did see the weak, the underprivileged and the oppressed; and they helped them. On the other hand, the goats apparently never saw the disadvantaged; or worse they never cared enough to help those in need that they did see. This prompts some questions to reflect on:

Do I see those in need around me?

Do I care enough to help the helpless that I do see?

Can you forget yourself long enough to find someone in need and offer help?

Do you see Jesus in the people around you?