Spirituality
Pencil Preaching





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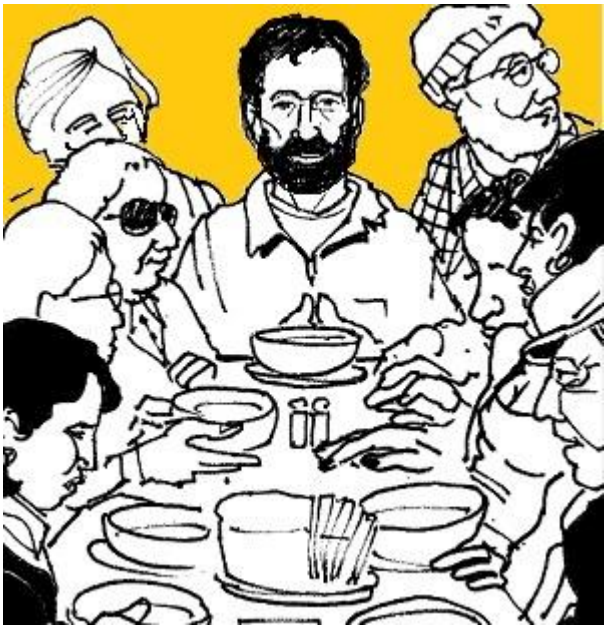

“When did we see you hungry and feed you, thirsty and give you drink?” (Matt 25: 37).

Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ

Ezek 34:11-12, 15-17; Ps 23; 1 Cor 15:20-26, 28; Matt 25: 31-46

Jesus’ descent into helpless humanity did not begin on the cross. It was the meaning of his Incarnation and a lifetime of emptying himself into anyone who received him. This turned out to be the poor, the lowly, the outcasts and throwaways in a world overturned by those who mistake glory for wealth and power. His mission was to turn the world right-side up again to reveal the humble beauty of creation and a human community made in the image of God.

Luke boldly announced this shimmering paradox when he reclaimed titles usurped by the Roman emperor in his Gospel. The official chain of command from Caesar to the regional governor, the lords of this world, would come to rest on the Lord of the Universe asleep in a feeding trough on a cold December night in Bethlehem. Recognized by vagrant shepherds and wandering wisemen, the child barely escaped Herod’s killers to begin his life as a refugee in Egypt. True royalty had slipped into the world and was already a threat to false gods and their agents everywhere.

Today’s solemnity is the culmination of Jesus’ downward mobility into human vulnerability, subjected to its sorrows and temptations, a slave facing death on a cross. Along the way he took the sins of the world on his shoulders, accepted the

full burden of human suffering from every victim he had healed, liberated and restored to hope. His messianic journey concluded when he mocked Roman power by riding triumphantly through the gates of Jerusalem on an ass. For that public affront, Jesus was crowned and enthroned on Golgotha as “King of the Jews.”

The church year culminates for us with a reminder of what real authority looks like: the power to serve, the triumph of compassion over indifference and the supremacy of love over delusions of control. We reflect on this in the light of the fall of a former prince of the church who abused his power, the voting out of a leader who debased his office and the memory of another whose Camelot ended in a tragic spate of assassinations that altered our history.

The proof that glory is a descent into service is the Resurrection of the Crucified Christ. Jesus’ final paradox to us as Lord is not found in grand churches and robed symbols of the ideals he preached, but in his mysterious disappearance among the hungry, thirsty, naked, outcast, sick, imprisoned and persecuted peoples in the world who bear the weight of today’s systems of wealth and control.

How much easier it would be had he enthroned where we could see and worship him? Instead, he hides in the least of our brothers and sisters, waiting to be discovered, served and loved.

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