

NOVEMBER 26, 2017



SOLEMNITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, KING OF THE UNIVERSE



EZEKIEL 34:11-12, 15-17

PSALM 23:1-2, 2-3, 5-6

1 CORINTHIANS 15:20-26, 28

MATTHEW 25:31-46

REFLECTION

In today's First Reading, God self-identifies as a shepherd who cares deeply for his sheep. "I myself will give them rest," God says. "The lost I will search out, the strays I will bring back, the injured I will bind up, and the sick I will heal" (v. 15-16). Why is this reading chosen specifically for our celebration of today's solemnity? Because it too shows us a different kind of power. God acts directly in our lives—as a shepherd, God himself cares for his sheep. God himself gathers his flock tenderly. God himself seeks out the lost sheep and heals the sick. Now, God acts through us. It's up to us, with God's help, to strive for God's Kingdom to come "on earth as it is in heaven," taking seriously our personal call to care for one another and our world.

ACTION

In the Spider-Man comic books, there is a saying shared with the hero by his Uncle Ben: "With great power comes great responsibility." Spider-Man takes these words seriously, and they play an important role in his decision to fight for justice and use his power for good. Similarly, Jesus shows us that as heirs to God's Kingdom each of us has both great power and great responsibility. He helps us understand that we have the ability and the duty to lead from below—to side with the poor and marginalized, to offer our love and support to those in need, and to set an example for those around us.

As Catholics, we see in today's Gospel reading the beginnings of a list of practices we call the Corporal Works of Mercy. These practices, straight from the Gospels, remind us that we are called by our faith to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, shelter the homeless, visit the sick, visit prisoners, bury the dead, and give alms to the poor. This is true servant leadership. Jesus models for us what it means to act with purpose, compassion, and love—if only we have the courage to do so.

JOURNALING QUESTIONS

- What great power do you have? What is your responsibility in bringing forth the Kingdom of God?
- What would change in your life if you took the call to servant leadership seriously?
- Write a prayer asking for the strength and courage to be a servant leader.