

Homily Christ the King Sunday 2010 – 11/21/10
Year A

(Take hourglass out of suitcase, turn over and place on table in front of altar)

Like the sands in an hour glass, these are the days of our lives.
So, here we aresharing a moment in time together.

The other night I was in a meeting with the Stephen ministers of our parish. At the end of our time together we had a few extra moments left over... so I asked them this question: “Where have you seen God in your lives recently?”

Does any special moment stand out in your week?
A moment that spoke to you in a special way?

There was silence in the room, as there should be as we take time to reflect on God moments in our life.

Today we celebrate a special moment within the church calendar.... the Solemnity of Christ the King.

In the Gospel reading we learn of a “God moment” in the life of a penitent thief. He sees God in his life through this man hanging on the cross next to him. This so called ‘King of the Jews’

This is a transitional moment for the penitent thief.
Webster’s dictionary defines transition as a passage from one state, stage, subject, or place to another

Christ the King Sunday is a transitional moment as it marks the end of church ordinary time, emptying, passing into the season of Advent.

The birth of Baby Jesus. A time of new life, new beginning.

Like the sands in an hourglass, emptying and passing into a new beginning.

Transitional moments in our own lives lead to something new.

What do we learn from these moments? What can we glean from the experience????

What choices do we make during time of transition? When life as we know it changes.

Lets take look at the Gospel reading:

We have two thieves right?

Both being crucified with Christ:

How do they receive and react to this moment in their lives?

What do they learn? What choices do they make? (**point to the timer**) **TIME IS RUNNING OUT ON THEM.**

One is clearly self involved, why me? A selfish, bitter and hardened heart. In total denial. His choice?
Physical survival.

Wrapped in ego And UNDER FIRE he sees his only choice is to GET HIMSELF OFF THIS CROSS. Not to accept it but escape it....

The other? In his own brokenness, his own suffering, nailed to a cross, he looks to his side at the man next to him, the one with sign above his head : **King of the jews**

He sees this man, So Beaten with life blood flowing out of him..

In that moment, He recognized the divinity of Jesus, Christ the King, at the moment when Jesus appeared most helpless, most human.

He recognized the divinity of Jesus, without the knowledge of the resurrection that we benefit from today.

He turns his total attention to Jesus,.....can you hear what he says To this “King of the Jews”?

Jesus.....Jesus....remember me....when you come into your kingdom. (He’s saying, Jesus, I believe in you, I believe.

Jesus responds “Today you will be with me in paradise.”

Through his newfound faith and he will soon receive Jesus’ outstretched hand.

Jesus offers himself to us into a relationship that is strong, even when it appears weak.

See the beauty of this God Moment in the penitent thief’s life? He accepts his cross and experiences a moment of conversion, a moment of refinement.

He was under fire and received the flowing grace of God leading him to new life, eternal. He lost his life to gain it. He emptied himself to Jesus. He was refined, purified within this transitional moment.

This reminded me of a recent story I received from a friend. I would like to share with you at this time.

THE SILVERSMITH

Some ladies, during bible study were reflecting on the 3rd verse in Malachi

(**read slowly**) "And He **shall sit** as a refiner and purifier of silver" (Malachi 3:3).

One of the ladies felt moved to visit a silversmith, (and I felt moved to phone the silversmith here in Fairport)

She asked him about the refining process. He explained the process and added "Timing is very important... if exceeded in the slightest, the silver will be damaged." Much care and patience is needed.

You know, I began to think:

For us, Being Human, it is only natural that we find ourselves in the "Fire" of crisis from time to time in our lives.

Does our Loving God, put us there?

No, we are there because of our own doing, or circumstances beyond our control.

But, our faith tells us that God, like a Silversmith is steadily watching over us. Offering to us the warmth of his refining, his purifying grace .

Upon learning that the silversmith watches over the silver during the purification process the woman asked him. "How do you know when the process is complete?"

He replied, "That's quite simple and very satisfying"

"The refining process is finished when I look into the silver and see my reflection."

PAUSE

*****Do you think Jesus saw his own reflection in the eyes of the penitent thief?*****

Jesus himself experienced the flames of crisis.. He emptied himself for us, His blood spilled out

And Through the waters of our baptism he put on Christ. In Christ, we are baptized. We will witness this as a community tonight.

In a few moments, a drop of water will be added to the wine the following words will be whispered:

"By the mystery of this water and wine may we come to share in the divinity of Christ, who humbled himself to share in our humanity."

The water added to the wine symbolizes the Divine taking on our human nature. And through baptism, and all the sacraments we come to partake in his divine nature.

Jesus wants to see his image in us. Its good for us to recognize him in our daily lives, in our moments, and take the time to receive his outstretched hand.

So, as we share this moment in time together today, we know its good to live in faith and return each week to receive the Word of God and the body and blood of Christ the King.

To live in the Kingdom of God for all time.