

Year A, Week 52

Text: Matthew 25: 31-45

Idea: Whatever You Do for the Least of These...

Hymn suggestion: Father, I Adore You

Items Needed: Jesus figure. Optional: Print up a picture (see below, or use your own) of the hungry, thirsty, lonely, etc. ideas to lay out and point to them as you mention them.

Set out all figures.

People continued to follow Jesus and listen to his teachings. He said:

One day, a king will sit with the angels to sort out merciful people from selfish people, like a shepherd might sort out sheep from goats.

When the king is finished sorting the people, he will say to those on his right, "Come along! You've been blessed by my Father. Come into the kingdom of God, created for you since the beginning of the world. The reason why you're experiencing the kingdom of God is because

- When I was hungry, you gave me something to eat.
- When I was thirsty, you gave me something to drink.
- When I was a lonely stranger, you were friendly and invited me in.
- When I needed clothes, you gave me some.
- When I was sick, you took care of me.
- When I was in prison, you visited me."

These merciful, righteous people will say, "But Lord, when did we ever see you..."

- hungry and give you something to eat?
- When did we ever see you thirsty, and give you something to drink?
- When did we see you as a stranger and invite you in?
- Or needing clothes, which we gave to you?
- When did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?"

The king will reply, "I'm telling you the truth: any time you took care of the least or lowliest person, you took care of me."

But then the king will say to the people on his left, "You are far away from me and from the kingdom of God!

- Because when I was hungry, you gave me nothing to eat!
- When I was thirsty, you gave me nothing to drink!
- When I was a lonely stranger, you weren't friendly and you ignored me.
- I needed clothes and you gave me nothing.
- I was sick and in prison, and you did not visit me or look after me."

They will answer, “But Lord! We never saw you hungry! Tell me, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or lonely or cold or sick or in prison! When was it that we didn’t help you?”

The king will reply, “I’m telling you the truth: any time you failed to help somebody – even the least or the lowliest person, then you failed to help me. That is why you are so far away from the kingdom of God.”

Questions without Response:

- I wonder ... if we have any ways to help people who are hungry or thirsty?
- I wonder ... if you know anyone who might be lonely?
- I wonder ... if you have ever shared your clothes with someone who needs them?
- I wonder ... if you’ve ever visited someone who was sick – or if your parents have visited someone who is in prison?
- I wonder ... if you know that God is always eager to forgive us, even when we fail Him and the people around us?







