

Christ the King Sunday
Homily – St. Benedict’s Parish
21/22 November 2009

Give me your *eyes* Church!
For years, you’ve given me your ears,
Now I want your eyes as well.

I want you to see something today.
I have a vision for you.

I am a prophet today.
Prophets reconnect people with God and reconnect God’s people with one another.

I am a prophet who stands in front of those he loves and shouts:
“Look, this is the Way!”¹

Daniel did that in today’s first reading. ² He saw someone like a Son of Man³ coming as a glorious king.
He saw a kingdom that shall never be destroyed. He saw the Alpha and the Omega.⁴

Look this way, Church! There is your King! [pointing to sanctuary crucifix].
The pierced one.⁵
And, “our glory is in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.”⁶

He is not a king
 Enthroned high above us,
 But lifted on a cross before us.
In royal garments,
 But stripped naked for all to see.
Clutching power,
 But with arms nailed open, embracing the world.
With some nation’s flag fluttering near,
 But with a scrap sign above Him mocking Him truly as
 “Jesus of Nazareth, KING of the Jews.”
Encircled with gold,
 But crowned with thorns.⁷

THE KING IS HERE!
 And St. Benedicts is our corner of His Kingdom.

So give me your eyes. I have a vision for our corner of the Kingdom.
Look! This is the Way!⁸

¹ Acts 9:2

² Daniel 7:13-14

³ Jesus’ most characteristic term for Himself, from Daniel

⁴ Rev. 1:8, today’s Second Reading, here I conflate Daniel’s vision with John’s

⁵ See Rev. 1:7, today’s Second Reading

⁶ Entrance antiphon for the Triduum, Holy Thursday; see also 1 Cor. 1:18-31

⁷ Inspired by St. Bonaventure’s “Soliloquies”

⁸ Acts 9:2

I SEE...

- living stones touching each other's lives,⁹
- an anointed people,¹⁰ renewed in Spirit,
- the fullness of Faith here¹¹

I SEE... A church that knows how blessed it is.¹²
A church thankful for the Eucharist¹³
 – the “source and summit” of the spiritual life¹⁴
 --and grateful for the four priests we have.
A church where clergy and laity alike take God's Word more seriously.¹⁵

- 12 Catechumens next year!
- 50 more kids in our school
- 100 baptisms
- and 500 children in our Religious Education Program!
- And why not Church? We have everything we need. Except the vision perhaps.

But I see it. Do you?

Look! This is the Way!¹⁶

I SEE...

- Proper worship here
 Packed pews
 Reverent adoration¹⁷ and roof-raising praise.

I SEE...

- A People standing for life
 And striving for Social Justice.
- Visits to the sick and lonely.
 I see that the last *lonely* tear was shed here yesterday.
- Mission trips and service projects
- College kids coming home here too
- High school kids rediscovering Jesus.
- I see *you* sharing the Good News.
- and I finally get to see your neighbors here too.

I see it Church. Do you?

⁹ See 1 Peter 2:4-10; also, *Christian Initiation*, General Introduction 4 (RCIA).

¹⁰ That is to say “Christian.” The Chrism anointing formula (infant bap.) on the *crown* of the head was in mind ...*as Christ was anointed priest, prophet and king, so may you live always as a member of His body, sharing everlasting life.*

¹¹ See the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #868.

¹² Referencing the ending comment of a recent presentation at St. Benedict's Parish on a service journey to Southeast Asia.

¹³ Playing on Greek word origins of Eucharist; homily given preceding Thanksgiving week (USA)

¹⁴ *Lumen Gentium* 11 the Eucharistic sacrifice as ...*the source and summit of the Christian life...*

¹⁵ A gentle hint!

¹⁶ Acts 9:2

¹⁷ Exposition and Benediction (unusual here) will be held at St. Benedict's the week after this homily.

I SEE a parish ready for this and more!

I SEE...

Hearts touched¹⁸
Minds enlightened¹⁹
Bodies healed
Spirits lifted
Lives changed.

I see the King's glory in this corner of the His Kingdom.

Why now? Why share the vision now?

Because you have been my Book of Glory²⁰ this month. I've read the vision in your eyes.
I am just articulating the vision you had first.

I've been reading you, my Book of Glory, and time and again lately you have shown me that
the "Kingdom of God is at hand!"²¹

"Now is the time."²²

I SAW that it was Fr. Joe's vision too, and all out priests, staff, and parish council.

I SAW it at the recent St. Vincent De Paul retreat.²³

What visions and prayer were shared there!
What love for this parish, this corner of the Kingdom!
Living Stones touching one another's lives²⁴

I SAW it when Justin became a Catechumen.²⁵

What amazing blessing poured out from many of you!
Living Stones touching one another's lives²⁶

I SAW it at a recent meeting²⁷

when David, one of our teenagers, spoke and said that
it is time for us to reach out to others in this church, not just to those sitting around us.
What vision!
Living Stones touching one another's lives²⁸

¹⁸ Lasallian spirituality referenced here; teachers touching hearts

¹⁹ *Christian Initiation*, General Introduction 3 (RCIA); illuminati/baptized connection

²⁰ Gospel of John, chaps. 13-20; today's Gospel pericope is from the Book of Glory.

²¹ Mark 1:15.

²² See 2 Cor. 6:1-2

²³ 24 October 2009

²⁴ See 1 Peter 2:4

²⁵ 4 November 2009

²⁶ See 1 Peter 2:4

²⁷ Evangelization Group meeting, 2 November 2009, 7 p.m.

²⁸ See 1 Peter 2:4

I SAW it in Helen at the Rosary Altar/Holy Name Pot Luck supper.

Do you know Helen? It's safe to say that Helen is in her 80's.²⁹ A recent widow. Mother of nine.
Helen told me how much she loves this parish, how much it has meant to her throughout her life.

She told me how her knitting has changed the past few years.
She can't do those fancy stitches she used to do anymore.

But she still knits dozens of hats for the Ladies of Charity every year. To keep the poor warm.

I don't think Helen saw a little tear form in my eye then.

You see, Church, Helen is losing her sight

But she has *Vision!*

She shares the vision for this corner of the Kingdom.

Do you?

No more single stones.

They wear down too easily.

Starting today, let's get in touch with each other.

Let's build a church.

Just like the people who built this building did, but let's build with living stones now.

Let your deacon serve you.³⁰

Let him put one living stone in touch with another living stone.

That is how we build the Kingdom of God together.

[Parish Spiritual Commitment /service consideration request followed.]

²⁹ Found out after the last Mass (11 a.m. 22 Nov 2009) from Helen herself that she just turned 89!

³⁰ Greek *diakonos* = servant