

Dear Eucharistic Ministers and Sacristans,

The following is a reflection by Karen Seaborn from Celebration Publications, for the Fifth Sunday of Lent.

The story is told of a blind merchant selling his wares in the middle of a busy train station, when a group of children bump into the table and knock much of his nicely stacked merchandise to the floor. As the story goes, the merchant gets down on his hands and knees in an attempt to retrieve his scattered goods. Another man, clearly in a hurry, rounds the corner to see the sight-impaired merchant on the floor.

The man stops for a moment, looks at his watch, his expression indicating his dilemma: If he takes the time to help this young man, he will likely miss his train. With only a moment's hesitation, he drops his briefcase, gets down on the floor, and helps the merchant gather and re-stack his goods. When all is in order, and the man walks away, the merchant calls out after him: "Hey Mister, are you Jesus?"

Now chances are this story is not actually true. But true or not, this story could well be a modern-day parable. It comes to my mind each time I hear the Greeks say to Philip, as we hear in today's Gospel, "Sir, we would like to see Jesus."

What was it about the man that caused the merchant to ask him if he was Jesus? Was it the fact that he died to himself in order to help a man he did not know and who would never be able to repay him? Might it have been that this busy man loved the merchant more, in those few moments, than he loved his own life, sacrificing his travel plans for another? Surely anyone who has traveled by train or air knows the inconvenience, not to mention the cost in time and dollars, of rebooking a trip or a ticket. Could it have been because the man got down on the floor and chose to serve the merchant in the same way Jesus served the poor, the marginalized, the outcast and disciples whose feet he washed?

In today's Gospel, Jesus responded with similar words when told that the Greeks wished to see him. "Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies," Jesus says, "it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit." Jesus continued, "Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life." And finally, "Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there also will my servant be."

Jesus' response to Philip and Andrew almost seems like a non-sequitur. What does any of that have to do with the Greeks' desire to see Jesus? And yet, as I think of the merchant's question, "Hey Mister, are you Jesus?" It seems to me that Jesus' answer to Philip and Andrew has everything to do with the question.

It was the Greeks who asked to see Jesus, Greeks who did not look or worship like the Jews. And I wonder, who

are "the Greeks" who want to see Jesus today?

Might they be living in the cellblock of a crowded prison?

Perhaps they are a single-parent family receiving government aid or a drug addict living on the street?

Might they be a family trying to find water and food on a dark night in San Juan, Puerto Rico?

Are they refugees from a Muslim country, undocumented people from Mexico, a couple in an unconventional marriage?

And I wonder, if we responded to these people today like the man responded to the blind merchant in our modern-day parable, if we, too, would come to see, like Jesus came to see in today's Gospel that "it was for this purpose that I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name." And, perhaps we, too, would hear a voice come from heaven saying, "I have glorified it and will glorify it again."

Some Information:

- Attached is the Eucharistic Minister Schedule from February 17, 2018 through June 3, 2018. This schedule takes us through Lent, Easter, Holy Week and Pentecost to the Feast of Corpus Christi. Look for schedule at www.steseton.com
- If you are assigned as an Eucharistic Minister at a Mass that **does not have a Deacon** present, please walk up the stairs (if you are able) and receive your bowl or your cup from the priest at the Altar. The **Deacons** have been a great help to the priests and they have been walking over and giving you the bowl or cup at the stairs. **When the priest is by himself celebrating the Mass**, be observant to walk up the stairs and to the altar to take the bowl or cup.
- Fr. Ken Simpson will lead our Lenten Mission on Monday February 26th, Tuesday, February 27th, and Wednesday, February 28th.
- Our Parish Lenten Reconciliation is Sunday, March 18, 2018 at 7pm.
- Please mark your calendars, the Easter Vigil celebrated on March 31st this year will begin at 7:30pm. Easter Sunday is April 1st.

Thank you for your patience in receiving this information and for your continued dedication to being an Extraordinary Minister of Communion.

Each one of you are truly a gift to our community. You represent the person in the story above. We are filled with appreciation for your goodness and your generosity. Wishing you many blessing during Lent and throughout the Easter Season.

Claudia Nolan