

I remember when I was a kid how I always looked forward to the Sunday paper, because the comic page used to carry a series of printed games. One of everybody's favorites was a picture showing some scene, like a family enjoying a picnic in a park. Printed beneath the picture were the words, "Can you find the man hidden in the picture?" Heck, we still do this as adults at times.

You'd look and look, and at first wouldn't see anything that looked like a man. Then you'd turn the paper this way and that to get a different view of it. Suddenly, from the edge of a fluffy white cloud you'd see an ear.

Then, from the green leaves of a tree you'd see a mouth, and so on, until you'd see an entire man's face smiling out at you from the picnic scene. Once you saw the man, that picnic scene was never the same again. For you had found the hidden man.

It's the same way in our own lives. We Christians know by Faith that there is a man hidden away in every scene of daily life. And that man's name is Jesus. Once we find Jesus, up close and personal, no scene in our lives is ever the same. That is part of the message of today's Gospel.

It changes everything for those who are willing to take the effort to pray that we might see and act upon it. Jesus, of course, is not trying to hide from us, but he does ask us to walk with him, as Peter did and thus was able to see him in a different light with the eyes of faith. God graces our lives, but we have our part to play.

"Who do you say I am?" is a question presented to every generation. I suspect if I went from person to person, most would know the answer. However, that can be like a history question that we can all answer.

To know the answer doesn't always mean much. For example, when Christ cast demons out of those possessed, the demons would say "Leave us alone, Son of David. We know who you are; you are the Son of God." Coming from a demon, I doubt that knowledge *changed his manner* of living.

Subsequent history offers testimony from many of the enemies of Christ. Julian the Apostate, for example, was an early Roman Emperor who devoted his life to destroying Christianity. His death bed words were, "Galilean, thou hast conquered."

Closer to our age, Lenin, the atheistic Russian revolutionary, said at the end of his life. "I was wrong. What I needed to save Russia were twelve men like Francis of Assisi." Too late my friends.

When Christ died on the cross, this centurion, his executioner, exclaims. "Truly, this man was the son of God." That testimony of his divinity is *not* from one of his followers. It is from his executioner. Wonder what he did with his life upon *knowing this answer?* I suspect a great deal.

Yes, most people today could answer the question, but that might be the extent of it. It is like those text books we used as kids, in which the answers to the questions could be found at the end

of the book. If that is all you did to answer the question, then you would understand nothing and no better for it.

If, for example, you come to God with conditions, you might want to re-examine your answer. I've heard people say, "I'm checking out Christianity, but I also understand Christians can't do this and the Bible says you're supposed to do that."

You're supposed to love the poor or you're supposed to give up sex outside of marriage. Not sure I can check all those boxes." Yes, people often want to come to Christ with certain conditions.

+Upon preparing couples for marriage one the questions asked of them is to whether they are placing any conditions to getting married? If the answer is yes, it is an impediment to marriage. No, to be married it has to be unconditional, for *better* or *worse*. Why would God demand any less?

To place conditions on God means we *don't* want to pay the price, we fall back and settle for the easy answer, the no commitment answer, the answer by education because the alternative means I may have to change my comfortable life.

But the real question is this: Is there a God who is the source of all beauty and glory and life, and if knowing Christ will fill your life with his goodness and power and joy, so that you would live with him in endless ages with his life increasing in you every day? If that's true, you wouldn't say things like, "You mean, I have to give up this or that?"

If Christ is really God, then all the conditions are gone. To know Jesus Christ is to say, "Lord, anywhere your will touches my life, anywhere your Word speaks to me I will say, "Okay, Lord, I'm am willing." A couple *in love* would say the very same thing. Are you in love with Christ?

The way you answer that question will affect everything about your life. Depending on *how you answer it*, it will change the way you spend your money. It is going to mess with how you spend your time.

It's going to rearrange your calendar and your checkbook. It's going to mess with the way you talk. It's going to change who you hang out with. It's going to adjust how you go through pain and suffering.

+Bishop D. Lorenzo suffered a great deal in the final days of his life. He was gasping for air and endured grueling days of dialysis. Finally, he told them to stop. When asked if he would like to be intubated, he said "No, I'm ready to go." He understood the question and served his entire life, the last gasp of life, for the Church. No matter what you thought of the man, you have to respect that.

I just wanted to thank all of you, particularly my staff, the Knights, our many volunteers and for those who stood watch with the Bishop. Did it mess with how you spent your time? Rearrange

your calendar? Who you hung out with? Perhaps, then you know the meaning of the question: "Who do you say I am?"