

Homily

Presentation of the Lord

February 2, 2020

The people in the temple saw Mary and Joseph enter with a small child. As we just heard in our Gospel reading, Simeon saw our savior, the Messiah, our Lord and our God. He saw the promise fulfilled. He rejoiced and honored God for the gift of His Son.

What do we see when we look around this holy building; what do we see outside these walls? What about the homeless man standing on the corner asking for a handout, the guy who cuts us off in traffic, or the co-worker who just took credit for our hard work? Do we see someone to avoid, to tolerate, to despise — or, like Simeon, do we see the face of Christ?

In this fallen world, it's easy to forget Who created it, Who created us. It's easy to see the evil, the ugly, and the bad. And how often are we guilty ourselves of what we see in others.

But we, each of us and our neighbors, and in fact everything we can see and can't see were made in the image of God, by the God of this universe.

The Holy Spirit, through Baptism, places an indelible imprint on our soul; once baptized, always baptized. It's in our Creed: "I confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins."

In baptism, we are adopted into God's family. We become brothers and sisters in Christ. And in being one in Christ, we are Christ. Whether we see it or not, **we are Christ for one another**. At this point it seems appropriate to break into song, but I promise I won't.

How would we treat each other differently if we saw Christ in one another?

Would we avoid the homeless; tolerate the rude; despise the despicable?

It's hard to see Christ in someone who just wronged us. So how do we do this?

Do we pray for that person or do we plan our revenge?

Do we turn the other cheek or do we strike back?

Do we remember that the other person may be having a very bad day or do we curse the other person for making our day worse?

Jesus experienced some of the worst things; He responded with love. When seeking solitude but pressed by the crowds, he pitied them and proceeded to care for them.

When abandoned by His friends in the garden, he forgave them. When hanging on the cross, He asked His Father to forgive them, "For they know not what they do."

Let's go back to basics. From an early age we were taught to put God first.

To truly put God first we have to let go of what others think and remember that we all are children of God, we are one family, we truly are Christ to one another.

I recently came across this prayer that fits well with the Gospel message of seeing Christ in others.

"Lord, help me to see You in the lives of those closest to me. Help me to rejoice in Your presence and to grow in love of others and in love of You as I see You at work in their lives. Jesus, I trust in You."

We rely on Christ for everything in our lives. We can rely on Him to help us see Him in each other and, maybe most importantly, seeing Him in ourselves.

We become one in Christ in the Sacrament of Baptism; we seek forgiveness and are forgiven through Christ in the Sacrament of Reconciliation; we receive Christ in His Word and at His Eucharist every time we come to Mass. We are strengthened by all this and we are strengthened by the love of one another.

Remember that we see Christ in every flower that blooms, in every snowflake that falls and in every face we see. Be Christ for one another.