

Homily
Friday after Ash Wednesday
February 16, 2024

If you flip a quarter, you have a fifty-fifty chance that it will land on heads. If you flip a quarter 4 times and it lands on heads each time, the odds it will land on heads again is still fifty-fifty. And no matter on which side it lands, it is still worth twenty-five cents. Whether it lands on heads or tails, it is still a quarter, two sides of the same coin. We can't have a quarter with two heads or two tails, any more than we can have two apparently opposing positions at the same time. It's either one or the other, even though they are often two sides of the same coin.

Whether we use the phrase Two Sides of the Same Coin, Cut from the Same Cloth, Two Peas in a Pod or Double-Edged Sword, we have one thing. Or in the case of Jesus, our Bridegroom, we have Jesus present with us or Jesus not with us. In either case, Jesus is our Lord and Savior, the Word Incarnate, the Second Person in the Trinity, our very Brother in all ways but sin.

Yet, we enter into this season of Lent with sorrow in our hearts, ashes on our foreheads, longing for the coming of our Savior. And in 40 or so days, we will feast and celebrate the presence of the God of the Universe, Who overcame death and restored life, the New Covenant. Two sides of the same coin. Through His Resurrection, we now can see the coin has two sides.

Before His Passion, Jesus walked among His disciples. They couldn't fast just as the wedding guests can't mourn while the bridegroom is with them. John's disciples fasted and repented for the coming of the Messiah. They couldn't see both sides of the coin.

Today, we know Jesus died for our sins, destroyed death, rose and restored life. Yet, we take this time to pause, a time to remember what leads us to His Passion, a time to recall our sins, a time to repent, a time to fast and give alms. Even though we do celebrate the Eucharist and receive Jesus, truly present in this Sacrament, we take time to recall when He isn't with us, in our sinfulness. We do this in faith, knowing that soon, we will celebrate the Risen Lord. Two sides of the same coin.