

Who Do You Say That I Am?

Matthew 16:13-16 - When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?".... Then he asked his disciples, "Who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God."

When I was a child, Easter was a celebration of baby chicks, bunny rabbits, colored eggs and Easter baskets carefully hidden from view for each of the five children that made up my family. It was new Easter outfits and an Easter dinner that was special. It was wonderful indeed because of the special touches and details that a wonderful mother arranged to make sure her children felt joy, excitement and love. As some of her grandchildren came to live with us, I realized the sacrifice and the commitment that this dear woman had made for all of us to have the best life she could give us with very little money and often times difficult circumstances. I even wondered, how do we measure this kind of love? Someone who is so willing to sacrifice for those she loved so much.

But Easter is indeed more than a celebration. It is far more than a spring holiday. As followers of Christ, the message and meaning of Easter is the declaration that "Christ has risen!" And we seek to know what his sacrifice means. We must understand the horrors of Good Friday before we can claim the miracle of Easter. We seek to understand what Jesus did for us on the cross and why he is most important in our lives. And we will be called to answer the question, "Who do you say that I am?"

Ash Wednesday calls us to remember our mortality and invites us to walk to the cross with Christ. To catch a glimpse of the greatness of Jesus Christ, we must first look at the suffering and humiliation that he went through with his death on the cross. And in walking with Christ to the cross we will discover "He is risen! Risen indeed!" We will be able to say with Peter, "You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God."

So, join me this season of Lent. Begin to understand how much Jesus was willing to sacrifice for those whom he loves. Spend some time being wrapped in his arms as we experience the love he showed for each of us. Spend some time just "being," that he might fill you with his forgiveness and his love.

Prayer: Gracious and loving God, help us to understand that Jesus came to earth, as a man to be a human being. He laid aside his divine powers and rights, didn't come as some arrogant king....but a servant for the good of all humankind. As we journey to the cross with Christ, give us insight and wisdom as to what that means for each of us and give us the desire and the opportunity to share the message of sacrifice and hope with others. For your extravagant blessings and your constant love, we give you thanks. In your precious name we pray. Amen.