

**Christ the King “A”
2017**

Thanksgivings when I was growing up were always at my Aunt’s house. My Aunt Peggy was my Mom’s younger sister – and she was loud and funny and had a laugh that would make anyone within hearing distance turn and join in with her. She and my Uncle Fritz also had nine children – so there were always at least 15 or more kids of all ages underfoot while she was trying to get dinner ready with my Mom and other assorted relatives.

Aunt Peggy was a multi-tasker like no other. She seemed to always be holding a baby – hers or one of ours in one arm – and at the same time getting dressing and other sides into the bowls necessary to set three different tables in various rooms of the house. When the inevitable skirmish broke out from a game we were playing – without skipping a beat Aunt Peggy became judge and jury. Her decision was always final – and required that everyone apologize and everybody hug it out before we were dismissed from the kitchen court.

She could run through 5 to 10 court cases during the time it took to assemble thanksgiving dinner. And her movement and her laughter were constant. The only thing that would make her stop would be the tears of a child. A misstep on the sidewalk – feeling left out of the crowd – sustaining an injury on the playing field – it never mattered what or how it happened – tears stopped Aunt Peggy in her tracks. She would stoop down – baby in tow – and kiss your knee – or rub your head – and tell you how much she loved you and then shower you with tickles until you couldn’t help but laugh. This ritual would be played out several times each Thanksgiving – and even now I can hear the laughter from this healer of souls.

Whatever you did for one of these least ones, you did for me.

These words from Jesus have long guided the Christian in how one should live. And we

usually do this well as individuals and as a community. The benevolence offered through Just Food, our help with Habitat for Humanity, Gift from the Heart, Link and Homebound and Hospital visitations – all of our collective work is answering the call of the Good Shepherd. As a community we reach out in love to the least among us.

But Christ also calls on us to look closer to home. To make sure that those we live with – those we work with – people we go to church with – those that we call family – we’re called to make sure that they know and feel the love of our God. We can at times find it easier to pick up can goods rather than offer forgiveness to someone who’s hurt us. It might well be less painful to write a check to Habitat than it is to tell someone, “I’m sorry.” who lives under the same roof.

Whatever you did for one of these least ones, you did for me.

These words of Christ our King refer to all people – those who lack basic needs – and those who feel lost – and hurt – and abandoned. And our call as those who follow the Good Shepherd is to reach out to anyone around us in need of hope, forgiveness, compassion, faith and love.

May we learn to be like the Aunt Peggy’s in our world – so we can be people who serve even as we stop to offer God’s love wherever we find a need. May we be joyful in our work as we build up this kingdom of love around us.

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