

Sunday, March 29

It's a Mystery

Pastor Hank

"Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." Matthew 25:40

It would be interesting to do a survey of people who are members of First Lutheran on the subject of volunteerism. We would be amazed at the number of people who volunteer in in the church and in the larger community, at the diversity of places where they volunteer, at the number of hours they volunteer, and at the great good that comes from their volunteering. Whether they know it or not, these volunteers among us are participating in a profound mystery.

Toward the end of the gospel of Matthew, we are let in on that mystery—the mystery of Christ's presence in others, particularly in others who are in need. In Jesus' words: "I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me."

When, you might ask, did I do such things? Jesus answers: As you do it to others, you do it to me.

Each of those others is Christ in disguise—that is the mystery. It is good to remember that mysteries are not meant to be explained, they are meant to be lived in—and in the living comes understanding. When we allow our passion and compassion to bring us to places of human need—a homeless shelter, a food bank, a home for runaway teens, a mentoring program for struggling kids, a free clinic, an English as a second language teaching program for immigrants, and the like—we find Christ in those places in the people we meet and work with. It is a mystery that we would do well to ponder—and to live in.

Prayer: Gracious God, fill my days with the serendipitous delight of discovering Christ in others. Amen.