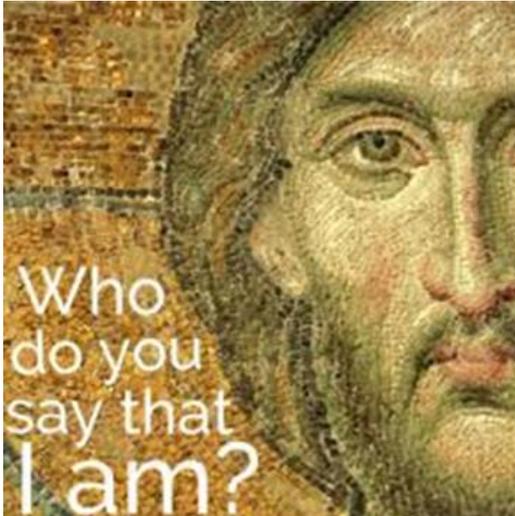




ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

THIS SUNDAY September 16 & BEYOND”

“Who Are You? Who Am I?”



On television for years and years, starting as early as 1950, it has been every major TV network's version of attempting to figure out the occupation, or reason for celebrity status, or some kind of major if relatively unknown honor of an individual. “What's My Line” was the first, zeroing on just one individual facing a panel of celebrities in their own right. Eventually TV viewership would also allow for the creation of “To Tell the Truth”, and “The Match Game”, and a few others that didn't fare so well. These newer

spinoffs would add up to three different people being interviewed, four people on the celebrity panels, larger prizes monies, etc. Probably the most famous line from one of these shows was “Will the real _____, please stand up.”

The question that Jesus asks, twice but in different forms, in the Gospel for this Sunday is thus a very, very familiar question for our TV viewing culture and society. “Who do people say that I am?”

And then, of course, the variant question asked quite directly to the apostles, “Who do YOU say that I am?”

Boy, it doesn't get any more personal, and uncomfortable, than that! And that being as in making one quite vulnerable, and potentially quite anxious about whether you are going to get it right or not. If you don't? You don't get the prize – or at least that's the win or lose indoctrination we get from the TV shows.

Of course, there is a difference between those human charades TV contests, and the way that Jesus frames his questions. For one thing, those guests on the TV shows don't sit down and then tell everybody who they are, where they came from, what they would know if they had read certain material, and more. That is, they didn't sit down and tell the panel who they were! There wouldn't be any game show, then, would there.

There was one thing in common leading up to Jesus' questions, and the game shows. The scriptures and the prophecies told of a Messiah who would be coming to save Israel, and all the world from sin and eternal death. Even details of birth, status of mother, power of ministry, death. And each game show would begin with some tantalizing clues of who the special guest was (although What's My Line was more investigative like Charades). For instance, "Our guest made \$1 Million dollars in the first year of a new invention, which was a newer and better and more hygienic toothbrush." I remember many times when watching "The Match Game" or "To Tell the Truth"; while voting for the person the panel thought was actually the real person being spotlighted, that instead of some rational reason, they would say something like, "Well, I don't think the other two look like a toothbrush inventor as much as #2 does.!!"

Can you imagine people choosing to believe in Jesus just because they think he LOOKS like a savior? Well, I'm not surprised when people do make that choice for a variety of reasons besides the one Jesus wanted to hear. And even then, people change their mind if it doesn't all add up in their minds and hearts.

Peter spoke up first when Jesus directed his question to the apostles: "You are the Christ (the Messiah), the Son of the Living God." Bingo! Sorry, Jesus didn't quite say "Bingo" – I have group games on my mind, obviously, but you get the point. That is exactly the answer. But not all the apostles got it all at the same time. There were a few who took longer to piece it all together, it would seem. And then there is Judas, who just walked off the set altogether. Some of those other apostles needed to continue to see the "power proof" of Jesus being the Son of God. They needed to hear more, too. But when they did, they were with him. You remember Thomas, doubting Thomas, who even before the resurrection said, "If he's going back to Judea, and they are going to kill him, then I might as well go and receive the same." That is clearly a vote for Jesus who has "Told the Truth." But you see there is another way to come to Jesus that he allows. "If you don't believe because of what I've said, then believe because of what you see is being done by the Father through me."

It is an age-old question. It is a question even deeply imbedded in our secular society as we search for our own identities. But at the heart of your eternal life, and that which will help you immensely to discover in fact who you really are, is the question Jesus asks, and asks. He asks it directly to you through his Spirit. You can see it displayed in God's power. You can read of it in ancient prophecies fulfilled in his birth and ministry. You can hear it if you will ask your own question, "Who is Truth"? The question is from Jesus to you, "Who do you say that I am?" And then he says to you, "Follow me."

Fr. Robert G. Eaton, Interim Rector

Readings for this Sunday – The Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

Isaiah 50:4-9 Psalm 116:1-8 James 2:1-5, 8-10, 14-18 Mark 8:27-39

CALENDAR

SUNDAY: The Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

8:00a Low Mass (Church)

10:30a Solemn High Mass (Church)

—*The entrance to the church is on 6th Avenue*—

Note: Coffee Hour & Fellowship follow the Mass in the Parish Hall.

MONDAY: 7:00p (AA) Doctors' Group (Fireside Room)

TUESDAY: Noon Mass (St. Mary's Chapel)

FRIDAY: AA Meetings

8:00p Ladies' Group (Fireside Room)

8:15p Men's Group (Parish Hall)

SATURDAY 7:00pm Willan West Celebration — Votive Mass honoring St. Mary