

COLORFUL SCRIPTURE

October 20, 2024

Earn a Place in Heaven by Sharing Love

Based on: Is 53: 10-11; Heb 4:14-16; Mk 10:35-45

By Marianne Couture

Wanted: places of honor in heaven. In this Sunday's Gospel, James and John want Jesus to promise them that they will sit on either side of Jesus in heaven. This Gospel is like the one we heard a few weeks ago.

Remember how the apostles argued about who was the most important in their group? Now James and John want the most important seats on either side of Jesus in heaven. Jesus tells them it is only God the Father who knows for whom these places are assigned.

When the apostles heard what James and John wanted, they were upset and argued about who deserved the best place in heaven. Jesus said he did not come as a mighty ruler to be served but as a servant of all people, and gently reminded them, "If you want to be great, you must serve others, too."

You know people who serve the needs of others: your parents, grandparents, teachers, clergy, religious sisters, police officers, firefighters, doctors and nurses, and missionaries bringing help and faith to people in isolated areas. One excellent example of what Jesus is talking about in the Gospel is St. Mother Teresa. We've talked about her several times before.

St. Mother Teresa started the Missionaries of Charity order of sisters in India. She worked with the "poorest of the poor" – the homeless, the abandoned, the sick, the uneducated and the dying. It did not matter that they were dirty and in ragged clothes. She picked them up from the streets, bathed them, gave them food, medicine and shelter, taught them and comforted the dying. She cared for them and showed them love – the way Jesus would.

St. Mother Teresa didn't look for recognition. She served the poor because she loved Jesus very much. St. Mother Teresa died in September 1997, but the sisters of her order continue to do the good work she started.

St. Mother Teresa once said, "Love has to be put into action and that action is service.... It is not how much we do, but how much love we put into the doing – a lifelong sharing of love with others."

That is how you earn a place in heaven with Jesus!

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Illustration by Phil Younk