

Scripture Reading: Mathew 25: 34-36

*Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'*

Whenever I get a piece of furniture that needs to be assembled, the first thing I do is lay out all the pieces, check the inventory, then sit down and read the assembly instructions. A new power tool or a microwave oven means reading through the operating manual. I do not want to mess something up. So, in my youth, when I thought about what it meant to be a Christian, I felt myself looking for the "operating manual". I knew I needed to love the Lord with all my heart, and soul, and mind ... and love my neighbor as myself. But what did that mean day-to-day ?

When I came across these verses in Matthew, I thought I found the manual, but I quickly realized it was only part of it. If it was the whole set of instructions, it seemed I could grab my wallet, hop in my car and probably "check off all the boxes" in a day. But as I thought more on it, I knew the scripture referred to an attitude, not a set of required actions. If Jesus is in my heart, then I will be generous to those less fortunate because I want to show God's love to his children as he has shown it to me. And this goes beyond physical needs but includes emotional and spiritual needs. For as they are blessed, I will be blessed.

*Prayer:* Lord give me eyes that see the needs of your children and a heart that responds to those needs. Amen

-Submitted by Rick Dobbins for the Twenty-fifth Reading of Lent.