

“BUT ...who do YOU say that I am?”

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Once upon a time, a little girl returned home from her 1st CCD class. Her mother asked her how she liked it. The little girl said:

“I didn’t like it at all.”

“It was your 1st time. Just wait a few weeks. You’ll come to like it,” advised her mother.

3 weeks later, the little girl came home from CCD with big tears in her eyes. Her mom asked:

“What’s the matter?”

“It’s CCD,” the little girl said. **“Must I keep going?”**

“Why?” asked the mother. **“What’s wrong?”**

“Well,” said the little girl, **“everybody keeps talking about someone named Jesus.**

And I don’t know who he is. I’ve never even met him.”

Cute! A little funny...indeed! **BUT**...and there’s that proverbial **BUT** in life. If you had to answer Christ himself, if he asked you, directly: **‘Who do YOU say I am?’** what would you write down? How long would it take you to answer? Would you need more than one sheet of paper?

Well-l-l, we meet him here in church when we hear his Word proclaimed and explained. We meet him around the Table of the Lord and in the Eucharist.

BUT...and there’s that **BUT** again, is this the only place where we can meet Jesus in today’s world? How about the other 6 days/week? **‘How about places beyond these walls?’** you ask?

Well I am glad you asked that question. Simply put, the answer is yes!

1st of all, we meet Jesus during the week when 2 or 3 are gathered in his name—especially so, as a family, when we gather around the supper table & say grace together in his name. At the moment they join hands, Jesus becomes present to that family in a special way. If holding hands while saying grace is not a part of your supper-routine, I suggest you do it this coming week as a special response to this Sunday’s Gospel. It may seem awkward at first, **BUT** it will help bring home the fact that Jesus joins you then & there, in a special way.

2nd way we meet Jesus during the week is when we reach out to someone in need. When we share with someone hungry, help someone homeless, touch someone lonely, we meet Jesus. He said:

“Whenever you did this for one of the least of these brothers (or sisters) of mine, you did it for me!” ^{Mt. 25:40}

3rd way we meet Jesus during the week is when we are tired, depressed, frightened, confused, or overwhelmed and we reach out to Jesus in prayer.

“Come to me, all of you who are tired from carrying heavy loads & I will give you rest” ^{Mt.11:28}

So, you see, we don’t have to get into some time machine to go back in history to meet Jesus. He is truly risen and present in our world today ...as he was present in Galilee 2,000 years ago! I now sum this up by saying...

Once upon a time, a man explained:

“Some 60 years ago, when I was a kid, the comic pages of the Sunday paper carried a series of games. My favorite was a picture of a scene, say of a family enjoying a picnic. Beneath the picture were the words: ‘Can you find the hidden man in the scene?’

I’d look and look &, at first, wouldn’t find anything looking like a man. Then, I’d turn the paper this way & that, to get a different view of it.

Suddenly, from the edge of a fluffy, white cloud, I’d see an ear. Then, from a green leaf, I’d see a mouth, and so on, until I’d see the entire man’s face smiling at me from the picnic scene.

Once one saw that man, the scene was never the same again. He would always be imbedded in that scene, with his smiling face.

And, it's that way in our own lives. We know, with the eyes of faith, that there is a man hidden in every scene of our daily life. And that man's name is Jesus. Once we find him, no scene in our life will ever be the same again.

I close with this prayer:

Heavenly Father, our Abba,

Sometimes we feel like that little girl who did not like CCD class.

*We hear people talking about you, **BUT**, sometimes, we feel we haven't met you.*

That's why it has been so difficult, at times, to answer the question you put to your disciples:

“Who do you say that I am?”

*Help us find you, not only in joined-hands around the supper table,
and in your Word & in the Eucharist,*

BUT... *also in outstretched-hands to help the lonely and the needy,
and in our up-reached hands to you in prayer.*

*Help us to see your smiling face, looking at us
from every scene of daily life.*

Then, with Peter, we too will be able to say with certainty:

'Lord, you are the Messiah... the Son of the living God.'

*And may that all-knowing, loving, and forgiving God bless you...
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.*