

Fifth Sunday of Lent

My brothers and sisters, many of us, who are older, can remember one of the great, simple joys of our childhood when our parents would buy for us a box of Cracker Jax. Not only did we enjoy the Carmel Corn and salted peanuts; but, we were also very excited to see the prize contained within. One of my favorite surprises was the little plastic magnifying glass that was in the little paper sack in the bottom of the box. It opened up a whole fascinating world to me.

My beloved brothers and sisters, Jesus is the magnifying glass that makes visible to us the whole reality of God. He makes visible to us what otherwise we could never see by ourselves. The Greek speaking pilgrims who were in Jerusalem for the Passover, the most important Jewish Holy day, when they hear about Jesus, are there because they are truly pious people, seeking God. They give us, one of the most beautiful prayers of the Bible. They come to Philip, the Apostle, and they say to him: "We would like to see Jesus!" So simple, so direct, and yet so powerful, because that is exactly the prayer that God wants to answer!

Jesus' response is long, and at first, confusing, He gives praise to God the Father, because in these foreigners, Jesus knows that the ancient promises of God, to gather in His people from East to West, is now being fulfilled. Jesus knows that this is now His time, when He will redeem His beloved ones from sin and death! That is why He responds by saying: "I will draw all to myself." You and I are the fruit of God's Divine Promises and the fulfillment of the Desire of Jesus!

Like that tiny magnifying glass, Jesus, by His crucifixion reveals the very heart and mind and will of God. God wants everyone to find Him, to see Him, to learn to know Him, and to Love Him, because He is so infinitely in love with us. God wants us! And so, in Jesus, He allows His crucifixion because He has desired, from the time of the first sin and death of our first parents, to expose His Heart of infinite love to us! His heart is so infinitely in love with us, that it is a blazing fire, willing to suffer unspeakable pain and humiliation in order to reopen the gate of intimacy with God for us. The crucifix is the great revelation, the great magnifying glass that lets us see the Heart of God! If we want to know and to see the reality of God's infinite love for us, then we need to look through the lens of the Cross!

The more we ponder and look through the instrument of the Cross, the more we will see and experience the truth of Jesus who continues the infinite mystery of the cross in every Mass we celebrate and in every confession we make and in every Communion we receive! Jesus, I want see you! Jesus, I want to be with you! Amen, Amen!