

APRIL 3 2025 FATHER LARRY MARCILLE

My dear friends in Christ,

Today we might ask ourselves this question — do we know the good news of Jesus Christ? And do we submit our lives to the wisdom and knowledge of God's word?

Jesus' opponents refused to accept His authority to speak and act in the name of God. They especially would not believe that He was sent from the Father in Heaven. They demanded evidence for His claim to be equal with God. Jesus answers their charges with supporting evidence and witnesses.

The Law of Moses had laid down the principle that the unspotted evidence of one person should not prevail against the man for any crime or wrong in connection with his offense that he has committed. This is from the book of Deuteronomy. At least two or three witnesses were needed.

So as we heard, Jesus begins His defense by citing John the Baptist as a witness, since John publicly pointed to Jesus as the Messiah and had repeatedly borne witness to Him. Jesus also asserts that a greater witness to His identity and equality with God the Father are the signs and miracles which He has performed. He cites His works—not to point to Himself but to point to God the Father, working in Him and through Him. He cites God the Father as His supreme witness.

Jesus assures us that the Scriptures themselves, including the five books of Moses, point to Him as the Messiah, the promised Saviour.

The problem with the Scribes and Pharisees was that they did not believe what Moses had written. They desired the praise of their own people, and since they were so focused on themselves, they became

blind-sighted to God. They were so preoccupied with their own positions as authorities and interpreters of the law that they became hardened, unable to understand the word of God. Their pride made them deaf to God's voice.

For Scripture tells us that God reveals Himself to the lowly, to those who trust not in themselves but in God alone. The lowly of heart listens to God with an eagerness to learn and to obey

Our Lord Jesus reveals to us the very mind and the very heart of God. Through the gifts of the Holy Spirit, He opens our ears so that we may hear His voice. He fills our minds and our hearts with the love and knowledge of God.

So we ask ourselves again — do we believe that God's word has the power to set us free from sin and ignorance, and to transform us to be like Him?

St. Augustine of Hippo wrote, and I quote: "As Christians, our task is to make daily progress towards God. Our pilgrimage on earth is a school in which God is the only teacher, and it demands good students, not the ones who play truant. In this school we learn something each day. We learn something from the commandments, something from examples, and something from the sacraments. These things are remedies for our wounds and materials for study."

And this is the school of the Holy Spirit.

We also celebrate today the feast of St. Richard of Chichester. In his prayer he says to us:

"Lord Jesus, Saviour, friend and brother, grant that I may know you more dearly, love you more clearly, and see you more nearly."

St. Richard was orphaned at an early age. However, his brother and guardian made sure he received a good education. He became a Bishop in 1244. He was not the first to line himself up with the king, so there were a number of disagreements between the two. But he himself lived a simple life, and he died in 1253. He was canonized very quickly, only nine years later by Urban VI. He leaves us with great reflection. And the reflection is this: God is faithful. If we serve Him faithfully, He will provide for all of our needs.

So today we ask St. Richard of England to pray for us.