

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER (Year A) - CSA SUNDAY
5-3-2026 Homily

Years ago, several businessmen in a big city were late getting out of a meeting, so they had to rush to the train station to catch the commuter train home. As they hurried through the lobby, tickets in hand, one of them accidentally knocked over a table holding a basket of apples, which a boy was selling to customers for a dollar apiece. The other commuters all reached the train and boarded it in time, but the one man, feeling a bit guilty, called after them, "Go ahead without me—I'll catch the next one." Then he turned to help the boy—and was very glad he did, for it turned out the ten-year-old was blind. As the businessman gathered up the apples, he noticed several of them were now bruised as a result of the accident, so he took a bill out of his wallet, pressed it in the boy's hand, and said, "Here's \$10 to cover the damage I did; I hope this didn't spoil your day." As he walked away, the bewildered boy called out after him, "Mister, are you Jesus?" The man had never heard anything like that question before; he stopped in his tracks, and wondered if in fact he had been like Jesus in that moment.

This is the sort of question that should make all of us stop and think, for in a certain sense, each of us is called to Jesus to others. When Philip asked to see God the Father, Our Lord told him, "Whoever has seen Me has seen the Father." We are Christ's disciples, and to a certain extent, whenever people look at us, they should be able to see the Lord—in our love, kindness, forgiveness, compassion, and concern. We're not supposed to try to substitute for Jesus—no one can do that—but we are supposed to reflect His presence through our lives and through our service of others.

As followers of Jesus Christ, we share not only His life, but also His mission, for He relies upon us to help bring about His Kingdom. Supporting the Catholic Services Appeal is one very important way of doing this. As Archbishop Weisenburger noted, we've all received many blessings from the Lord, and if we're truly grateful, our response will be a generous one—certainly through using our opportunities to serve here in the parish, and also in the larger world, including at work or school, in our neighborhood, and in the larger community. However, financially supporting our parish, and the Archdiocese of Detroit, is also essential, for as the Archbishop stated, when we all work together in this way, great things can happen. The CSA started forty-four years ago; I remember its beginning very well, for that was the weekend of my ordination and my first Mass as a priest. Since 1982, the CSA has changed many lives throughout southeast Michigan, supporting numerous ministries in Catholic education, seminary formation, hospital and college chaplaincies, parish life, evangelization and outreach efforts, and various specialized ministries and services, thereby accomplishing great and important things that no one parish or individual could do alone.

Please carefully examine the letter and informational brochure that we've sent in the mail to all I.C. parishioners, and prayerfully consider what the Lord is asking you to do in this regard. So many suffering persons in today's world might look at us and ask, "Are you Jesus?" Our support of the CSA is a way for us to respond, "No, but I am a friend of His—and He asked me to reach out and serve you in His Name."