

THE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

“Peter said to Jesus: ‘We have given up everything and followed you.’”

Mark 10: 29

Each year we make New Year’s resolutions. We promise to eat less of certain things, avoid certain foods or activities, embark on programs of exercise or walking, etc. If we were successful in carrying out these resolutions, we probably would not need to pursue them each year. And then each Lent we make promises to give up certain little pleasures or enjoyments as a sacrifice to get us into spiritual shape to celebrate the great feast of Easter. Giving up certain things. Offering up certain things. I remember my dad giving up martinis when my mom was sick and in pain. He did this for her. It was a sacrifice, a way of having a small share in her own suffering.

We do such things as human beings from time to time. Our love tends to bring out the best in us, even to the making of sacrifices on behalf of another. Parents do this for their children all the time. It is not done with any grand announcement. It just happens because mom or dad decides to do it.

In today’s gospel Peter turns to Jesus and says to him point blank: We have given up everything for you.” Jesus knows the truth of what Peter speaks. The unspoken part of Peter’s statement is what Jesus addresses. The unspoken part is: What difference does it make? Is there any benefit to us for having done this? There is a self-referencing piece to the conversation. What’s in it for us?

Jesus recognizes what is not being spoken out loud. He speaks right to it. The Father knows of your sacrifices. The Father will never be outdone in generosity. Whatever you have sacrificed will be restored many times over and in great abundance. Only keep trusting even when you are not yet experiencing it. For the way of the Lord leads to life forever in his kingdom. Each of us must ask: Do I really believe this? And that is the question of the week.