

That All May Know the Savior: Having it Both Ways

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If we form our image of the world by looking at greeting cards, then autumn is a time of changing leaves, pumpkins and harvesting golden fields of summer wheat. In Arizona autumn is a time of, well, more summer. There is an apparent conflict between what our expectations tell us should be happening, and what is actually happening, or at least what seems to be actually happening. We go to a football game, but instead of wearing a sweater and a scarf around our neck we put on shorts, which, by the way, we are still wearing during the ever-lengthening baseball season. Our calendars aren't confused; this is the desert. It has been this way in the desert for more years than we can collectively remember. Can we possibly make sense out this mother nature/calendar/expectation confusion?

Of course we can, we're Catholic! Our truest selves have resonated with creation as God gives it, and we resonate with the truth that is found in an ordered celebration of life. It's because we are Catholic that we can say "and." We don't merely recognize that there are at least two sides to reality. Because we are Catholic we don't merely live with that idea, we celebrate it.

We celebrate the "both/and" truth of life when we take care of each other even though we are angry; when we forgive each other even though it still hurts, in other words, when we serve each other. When we minister to one another we affirm that life is more complicated than any one of us can solve. And yet we continue to serve one another as the Body of Christ. Others might see contradictions where we see the Body of Christ. That is a core mystery of our faith, a central "both/and." Jesus Christ is fully human and fully divine. And our faith is not a problem to be solved, but rather an invitation to deeper understanding by living the mystery in the "everydayness" of our lives. It is an invitation to seek the face of Christ in others who we know are not perfect, and to be that face to others, knowing we are far from perfect. In order to do this, in order to be this, we must be created in the image of a loving and generous God. And we are!