

# Second Hand Preacher

*30<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time*

October 25, 2015

**Hebrews 5:1-6**

“You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.” The author to the Hebrews cites verse 3 of Psalm 110. Just who is Melchizedek? He is the King of Salem and priest of the God most high who blesses Abraham on his way back from battle. Abraham proceeds to give him 10% of everything. This is a showing of what it means to tithe or give 10% in support of your faith. Melchizedek is seen as like Jesus, as they were both priest and king. We celebrate Jesus as Christ the King and he is the eternal priest who sacrificed himself for all.

The author to the Hebrews writes about Melchizedek because he would have been familiar to the Jews who have become Christians. They would have grown up with the story knowing that he was both priest and king. Temple priesthood was a God given profession and while it was unlikely that they worshiped in the temple, they would have held this title in high esteem. The Jews longed for their own king. In much of their history, the Jews were under the rule of someone else. Having a king meant they would prosper as a people. Priest and king were categories that these followers of Jesus could understand as they tried to grasp the reality of Jesus. We will never really know him in this life, but we can, like the Hebrews, grow in knowledge and devotion.

Even though High Priest and king are not common for us, hopefully we can appreciate the vastness of who Jesus can be for us. If you ever get to St. John the Evangelist in Union Hill, look at the front of the altar. You will see 3 scenes from Scripture. In the middle is the Last Supper. To the right is the binding of Isaac whom Abraham was willing to sacrifice for the Lord. Isaac is often seen as a comparison to Christ. Not the fullness of Jesus, but a bit of a preview. To the left is Melchizedek who is shown in crown and priestly clothing. These pictures can help us grasp the reality of what the sacrifice of Jesus should mean and how it takes root in the Old Testament. The author to the Hebrews can give us portraits of who Jesus is for us.