

Mark 10:2-16

Oct. 3, 2021

Grace and peace be with you from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Are you a lumper or a splitter?

Do you like to lump things together or do you like to split them apart?

When you go trick-or-treating, do you split the chocolate from the other candies and then sort them from favorite to least favorite? Or, do you just leave it all lumped together in your trick or treat bag as candy?

Lumpers and splitters? Perhaps at certain times you are a lumper and at other times you are a splitter.

Is all meat meat, or is meat beef and then there is pork, chicken, turkey and so forth?

Lumping and splitting. I suppose the answer to – are you a lumper or a splitter – is the good Lutheran answer of – yes. Yes. I'm sure at times we lump and at other times we split.

In today's Gospel reading, the disciples were being splitters. Adults were allowed to see Jesus, but not the children. The children were split from the others as not being good enough to see Jesus. Perhaps they thought the children would be wasting Jesus' precious time.

Here again we see our disciple friends being judgy. Splitting, after all, requires some sort of judgment. This person is a child and this person is an adult. This person may have access to Jesus and this person may not. This person is worthy, but that one is not.

Splitters. The disciples are a bunch of splitters.

But, Jesus on the other hand sees everyone, all people, as children – children of God – so he tells the disciples to let them come. Don't block them. They are worthy. All people are worthy.

Jesus is a lumpner.

Thank God Jesus is a lumpner, right?

He is actually the ultimate lumpner, because even as God he takes on human form to be one with us. Lumpner. Jesus is a lumpner.

And so when the Pharisees come to test Jesus. Yes – it was a test, because the Pharisees and Sadducees were arguing about whether or not divorce was ok.

And, the discussion about divorce got John killed. He told Herod that neither he nor Herodias should get divorced just so they can marry each other. So, for Jesus, this talk about divorce wasn't just theoretical, it was also life or death.

And so Jesus simply points out that people like to split, but God likes to lump. God's all about bringing people together – all people.

And so verse 9 actually says – What God has joined together, people need to stop separating. Even men and women are the same flesh, so stop separating them.

People can be splitters, but God is a lumpner.

Jesus has come for all people – men, women, non-binary, children, adults. It doesn't matter. For God, all people are lumped into God's children.

God loves all people so much, that God even takes on flesh to be one with us, lumping the human and divine together for all of eternity.

God is a lumpner, and today we celebrate World Communion Sunday.

Churches across the globe in every country are celebrating the fact that all churches are really just one church – Christ’s church.

We celebrate that every time we have communion, but often people forget about it. They don’t see God’s work of lumping, because we are all split in our own congregations. So, today we are proclaiming explicitly that which is implicit every Sunday – there is not many churches, but only one Church.

Yes – we meet in different areas and speak in different languages – but any time we have Holy Communion, we join with all people from all times and in all places. There is only one table and there is only one host – Jesus Christ our Lord.

And tomorrow is St. Francis Day. St. Francis was also a lumpner, and following Jesus he took the lumping even further. He proclaimed that it’s not only people who God lumps together, but all of creation – all of it – from the birds of the air to the eels of the sea, from the top of a Mount Everest to the molten lava at the center of the earth – God’s good news is for all of creation.

As Jesus tells us in Mark 16:15 - “Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation.” All of creation! Jesus is a lumpner!

Jesus came to all of creation to proclaim God’s good news of unending and unconditional love.

The Pharisees and Sadducees, on the other hand, were concerning themselves with clean and unclean. But, for Jesus, nothing is unclean, because God created it all. So, Jesus comes to proclaim the good news to all of creation and then sends us out to do the same.

So, how might we live into that? How might we re-imagine what we think is accursed as actually being a blessing – things, animals, and people alike?

Today in Taos, they have discovered that plastic waste actually makes great insulation for their adobe style homes and in Haiti they use gallon jugs covered with concrete to make energy efficient homes.

In Mark 10, Jesus is on his way to Jerusalem and the cross.

Before his resurrection, people only saw the cross as a curse, but Jesus revealed it to us to be a blessing, because on it God was able to proclaim to the world that nothing is beyond God's love. Nothing. Not even death.

And so, today, we celebrate that God is a lump. God lumps all of creation together into Jesus' wide open embrace.

Nothing is outside of God's love. Nothing.

So, we can stop being splitters, judging what is worthy or not of God's love, and simply assume that everyone and everything is, because we are.

That sure makes life easier, right? Being set free from judging is actually freeing.

Again, ours is not to complicate the Gospel. Ours is simply to live it out in our everyday lives – to be a lump, just like Jesus, lumping everything and everyone into God's beloved community.

No one, and no thing, is outside of the love of the one who creates all that exists.

Thanks be to God. Amen.