

good shepherd deepens this understanding in the story of the shepherd who seeks out the one lost sheep of the hundred in the fold. He carries it home on his shoulders. To this story of God's love, we are called to respond and follow in discipleship. The story of the Last Judgement is a reminder that we are called to take responsibility for our lives and that the commandment of love is the invitation to be followed. God does not reject us, but in freedom we have the possibility of rejecting God and God's invitation to love. Through our actions, we determine how God will judge us.

Christ the King presents an image of humble love and service of others. God knows our weakness and need for healing but invites us out of our brokenness to be close to those who are weakest in society. It is important to recognise one's Achilles heel in order to be compassionate to others.

Application

At the end of the Church's year and as we prepare for Advent, we are invited to take stock of our lives and recognise the action of God's grace in shepherding us throughout the last year. Can I see the times of darkness or the times when God has healed me? Are there times when God's love, through love of those around me, rescued me from darkness and despair? Do I thank God for this love?

If I stood before the cross at Monasterboice, what would it say to me? How have I responded to the invitations with which I have been presented in those who are poor and weak? With gratitude let us thank God for the way we have responded. Perhaps there is also need for repentance for moments of selfishness and carelessness: God who heals can forgive and show mercy, which can restore us to new life.

The feast of Christ the King is a celebration of God's love, which extends to the ends of the earth. To recognise God's love is a call to praise and gratitude.