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Christ the King

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Micah Theotokos Community

As we end the liturgical year, many of us are preparing for family gatherings of Thanksgiving. With Advent beginning next week and Christmas a month away these readings can seem out of touch with the season and what's going on in our lives. The gospel takes us back to the crucifixion of Christ the King, reminds me of holy week.



For this reflection allow me to replace Christ's crown of thorns with a crown of roses. Roses are one of my favorite flowers so I'm using the image to visualize Christ the King reflected in the beauty of an opened rose. A rose opens in its own time, one cannot force it to open. While we don't have the power to open a rose we can enable it by putting it in water once it's cut, by fertilizing, weeding, and watering the ground around a rosebush.

If I think of my life as an unfolding of rose petals, it is not what I do, or what I make that matters or causes my petals to open. Rather it's being open to God's power and God's influence and God's grace and God's mercy that allows each petal to unfold. It's being open to the nudging of God. When my flower unfolds, when I open to God's will, the magnificent beauty inside is God's beauty! When I spend quiet time in prayer and reflection I recognize how God is opening my petals.

I have been disappointed when a rose fails to open. Why? Because I know there is beauty inside that I will not get to see. Often I opened up the closed flower to find the petals shriveled and the colors dulled. I imagine God is disappointed when I don't open, open myself to His will, His mercy, His love. When I can't forgive myself or others I am not receiving God's mercy, His grace. When I see the needs of others and fail to act upon God's nudging to help, my petals fail to open. Then I feel guilty for not being more useful in His service.



Being involved in a Lay Marianist community has been an experience of friends nurturing my life, like one nurtures a rosebush. When we meet, we share the highs and lows of our week. This casual sharing around the dinner table and their support has given me much strength this past year while caring for my elderly parents. When we get together our flowers are at

different stages of openness and beauty. We support each other in whatever issues we are dealing with. Our community is like a crown of roses.

I am fulfilled when I find myself among beautiful, fragrant roses who make up community, Christ the King's crown. I know I belong to this crown at whatever stage I'm in because our Marianist community has allowed Christ's love, His mercy and grace to unfold. I more fully understand Chaminade's value for community and am thankful to be part of the Marianists!

Envision Christ the King with a crown of roses and you are one of those roses. Unfold and open today!