

In some Cathedrals in Europe, you can find the wheel of fortune depicted in the artwork. We're not talking about a casino game or television program. The medieval wheel of fortune is spiritually beneficial. There are four interesting figures depicted around this wheel. The fellow on top says in Latin, "Reigno" "I am king, I reign". There's an unfortunate chap on the side who is falling from grace saying, "Regnavi," "I used to be king, I used to reign" Then at the bottom, there's this pauper who says, "sum sine regno," "I have no power. I don't reign." As we continue our journey up the wheel of fortune, there's this arrogant fellow who says, "Regnabo." "I am going to reign. I will be king." This work of art suggests that if you're the pauper, hang in there, there's only one direction from the bottom and that's up. If you're power hungry, seeking fame, you may get it, but it won't last. If you're master of the universe, good, but you won't be forever. An interesting thing about the wheel of fortune as a work of art: anyone who walks through the Church doors walks into a place where princes and paupers are both welcome. They can look up and place themselves somewhere on the wheel. At the center of the wheel of fortune is none other than Christ the King! The invitation is to stop living on the edge of the wheel but go to the center of existence to find Jesus who alone transcends the wheel of fortune and the fickleness of life. Jesus exists at the center of the wheel because He was just as divine when He was born in poverty as He is in heaven. Jesus was just as much royalty on Good Friday as He was on Palm Sunday. No matter where Christ found Himself in life, He transcended the wheel of fortune.

How do we transcend from the periphery of the wheel to the center where Christ reigns? The journey begins with humility. Humility is akin to honesty. Being humble means standing on **humus**, a Latin word that means "ground". A humble person is grounded, he or she has an honesty about who they are, that no matter where life takes them to riches or poverty, they transcend the wheel of fortune by being centered, grounded in Christ. A great example of this is St. Teresa of Calcutta. When you read about Mother Teresa's life and read some of the letters she wrote, it's interesting how Mother Teresa revealed that she sometimes placed herself at the bottom of the wheel of fortune in her relationship with Christ. As Mother Teresa found herself at the bottom of the wheel, what was her reaction? Did she self-medicate so to attempt to forget her problems? Did she max out her credit card on things that eventually turn to dust? Did she try to spin her wheel of fortune in vain desperation? No. She responded to her place on the wheel with humility, grounded in her relationship with Jesus. She sometimes experienced herself at the bottom of the wheel, and behold, the last has become first.

Where are you and I currently on the wheel of fortune? Are you the king or queen of your mountain, on top of your game, well, that's good, one day you won't be. Are you the unfortunate pauper, having every kind of bad luck? The good news is things can only get better. Regardless of where I find myself on the wheel of fortune right now, a better question: how grounded am I in my relationship with Jesus? Only Jesus can make sense of our lives in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health. A powerful doorway to a deeper relationship with Jesus is the Eucharist. In the Eucharist, we see the all-powerful God fully present to us in simple bread and wine. That's humility. God wants to be as close to us as food and drink. No matter if things are going well or badly, God wants to be incarnate in our hearts through Holy Communion and food for the journey. The invitation is to walk humbly with God toward the center of our existence where we find Jesus.