

FR. JOHN'S HOMILY

Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe , November 21, 2021

The Solemnity of Christ the King was established by Pope Pius XI in 1925. Pope Pius XI established this Feast to go against the secularism and materialism in the modern era. One hundred years later, we can add relativism into the mix. In the Second Vatican Council, this Feast is moved to the end of the liturgical year to remind the faithful to always look for God's Kingdom, which will come at the end time. However, we know God's Kingdom is already present among us, but it will be fully manifested when Jesus our King will come the second time.

Until then we have the challenge of the Solemnity of Christ the King to make sure that we belong to Jesus and His kingdom, and not to this world. Belonging to Jesus does not mean we cut ourselves off from this world, it means we are called to live in it, but not belong to it. We have to make sure that we live for Jesus, and that everything we have and possess, and who we are glorifies Jesus. If we are not careful, we can lose our way and things of this world become more important than God's kingdom. If our Faith is weak, then ourselves, and this world will become more important. I do wonder about our families who have not returned to Church since the pandemic and those who have no regular practice of their faith. If they are not here in this place of worship, then how are they growing in their faith and in their relationship with the Lord?

The invitation today is to make sure that Jesus and serving Him and His kingdom, means everything to us. Every aspect of our life and who we are belongs to Jesus. Like a teenage girl who after a retreat weekend found a renewal in her faith. From the retreat she started wearing the WWJD bracelet (What Would Jesus Do)? Shortly after the retreat, she had a big argument with her sister, as she stormed away she reached for the staircase rail and saw her bracelet. WWJD -- it stopped her on the steps. She immediately went back and apologized to her sister. She knew this was what Jesus wanted her to do. Or a Man who enthrones his house to the Sacred Heart of Jesus to make Jesus the Head and Lord of his family and this house. He comes in from work and his wife immediately begins to complain about the lingering neighbor situation. She didn't say hello, how was your day or anything. Just straight to complaining. He didn't handle it well; they both yell at each other and said things he immediately regretted. He felt bad about it, left the kitchen to go clean up and cool off. As soon as he passed the Sacred Heart picture that he enthroned in his house, it stopped him in his tracks, and he immediately went back and apologized to his wife. They hugged and both went over to the neighbors to once and for all solve the problem. In both of these instances, it is about hearts allowing Jesus to be their Lord and King. It's about serving the Lord and His kingdom and not our own.

So on this Feast of Christ the King, we hear from the Book of Daniel. He recounts visions he receives from the Lord. In that vision, all peoples, nations, and languages serve the Lord.

This is a vision of what can be, not a vision of what is. Only if we seek the Lord faithfully will the world ever be this way. But at the end of time, this is what will be. Hopefully God's people will understand this and give themselves once again to the Lord's service.

The Second Reading is from the Book of Revelation. We are given a prophecy that at the end of time everyone will see the Lord Jesus, even those who have pierced Him. That is to say that even those of us who have wounded Christ with our sins can see Him in the end. This is not a prophecy of universal salvation but a prophecy that at the end, each of us will see the Lord. This is the judgment that is to come. If we have made Jesus our Lord God and King, then all will go well. If not, then things will not go as well.

In John's Gospel, We must choose to be in His Kingdom or we choose the consequences of putting our faith in someone else or something else, creating a false god, which will not give us what we seek. Look at the trial of Jesus before Pilate, Jesus presents Himself as a humble and truthful King. When Pilate asked Jesus, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus says, "My Kingdom does not belong to this world". Jesus' kingdom is something more that this world can ever offer us. And yet many times we struggles to put our faith and trust in Him and living for His Kingdom.

More people may follow their own ambitions, their own pleasures, or go after prestige and powers of this world. They put themselves out of God's Kingdom when they chose to follow their own kingdoms; a kingdom of selfish, of hatred, and of violence, etc. It is very obvious facts in our world today. This is not the way we are called to live.

Pilate asked Jesus the second time: "Then you are a king?" Jesus did not deny it but he reveals what kind of King He is and something about His kingdom. "Whoever belongs to the Truth, and listens to my voice," says the Lord, "knows about my Fathers Kingdom".

So, the Feast of Christ the King reminds each of us: who is our King? We can have only one King. There cannot be another. His name is Jesus Christ. And His kingdom, as we pray today is: an eternal and universal kingdom, a kingdom of truth and life, a kingdom of holiness and grace, a kingdom of justice, love and peace. This is the Lord's kingdom that is called to reign in our hearts. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

This feast of Christ the King is about serving Jesus and His kingdom. We may perhaps not choose His ways always or consistently, but the Lord who knows our hearts and our beings will know whether we truly seek Him. This is why it's good to have reminders, like a bracelet, necklace, picture, cross, markings, anything we can do publicly to say we are followers of Jesus. Today on this Feast we are called to choose the Lord Jesus. *Come, O Lord, Jesus Christ my King and reign in our hearts.*

