

Christ the King Year B 2018

Let us pray for the coming of the kingdom as Jesus taught us?

For years this invitation was spoken by the priest at every Mass, inviting us to pray the **one and only prayer** that Jesus taught us: the “ Our Father.” In that prayer, we are given 7 petitions by Jesus. The second of those 7 is “thy kingdom come”

This refers to the final coming of the reign of God through Christ’s return at the end of time. For it is then that Jesus will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead which we recite in our Creed

Today’s feast of Christ the King which comes at the end of our liturgical year, invites us to honor Jesus Christ as the king of a kingdom that is unlike any this world has experienced or will ever experience.

“My kingdom is not of this world Jesus answers in response to the interrogation of Pilate in that famous encounter that would proceed the crowning of our king on Good Friday.

The prophet Daniel would give us a portrait of this unusual and otherworldly king, from a vision which God gave him of the whole of human history. The vision described the kingdoms of the world ruled by huge gruesome beasts who terrorized those they ruled. But from today’s first reading the visions conclude with a promise, with a vision of hope “one like a son of man coming on the clouds of heaven, and he was given the final authority, glory and power, and in the end, all nations worshipped him. We would come to know him as Jesus Christ.

His kingdom possesses three qualities that no other kingdom can claim. His kingdom is eternal, it is universal and it is personal.

First: His kingdom is Eternal

Looking back at our human history, empires have come and gone. Some good, and some very frightening.

The Roman empire is gone, The Greek empire is gone. The French empire is gone. The Spanish Empire is gone. The British Empire is gone. The Japanese Empire is gone. The German Empire is gone. And more recently, the Soviet Empire is gone. All gone, but Jesus Christ and his kingdom remains.

When human history is finished, and after the collapse of every human kingdom, or dynasty, in the end there will only be Jesus Christ. Only His kingdom will endure. Only his kingdom is eternal.

Second: His kingdom is Universal

Jesus' kingdom is established by his Death and Resurrection. The crown of thorns is symbolic of the uniqueness of our king. It is not a comfortable crown. No earthly king can wear or merit this crown. It is formed from the sins of every generation. For sin is a wound that effects every culture, all times and all seasons. There is no place on earth that has not been touched by sin. Jesus was crowned king of the universe as he went to the cross, for the sins of all people, living and dead. All salvation comes through him. There is no other avenue of spiritual healing and forgiveness for anyone.

And this truth point to the importance of the Mass which makes present the one sacrifice of Christ that redeems all people. The kingdom of Christ is universal.

His Kingdom is Personal

When Jesus said to Pilate that his kingdom was not of this world he was referring to its power. Its power is not from our understanding of worldly power. It is not a military force to be feared, it is not about nuclear threats. Its power come from the grace that flowed from the sacrifice on the cross that makes it possible for us to be truly free from the power of sin. And that is very personal.

Our participation in this life-giving kingdom begins with Baptism when we are spiritually clothed in Christ, and continues to be offered to us through the grace that comes through the sacraments that follow with special emphasis on the Eucharist, which is our most intimate and personal participation in the life of Christ our king.

On this Feast of Christ, the King, we celebrate a kingdom that is not of this world but is very much present in the world, in and through the person of our one and only king, Jesus Christ, who is actively present in our lives.

And his kingdom is **eternal**, for while all other empires fall, his kingdom remains. It will never end. It is **universal**, as its redemptive grace is offered for all peoples for all time. And it is **personal**, for the first fruits of his kingdom is the forgiveness of our sins, which give us true freedom, the freedom to love as Christ has loved us.

Gospel Challenge:

Is Jesus Christ the king of your whole life? What does that mean for you?

Consider this in the context of your closest relationships, your work, your finances, your family, and especially how you care for your body, your mind and your spirit.

(For those in group study, share your thoughts with each other. Have the courage to tell of those times when you fell short of this commitment.)