

Christ the King of the Universe

On the last Sunday of each liturgical year, the Church celebrates the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, or Christ the King. Pope Pius XI instituted this feast in 1925 with his encyclical *Quas primas* ("In the first") to respond to growing secularism and atheism. He recognized that attempting to "thrust Jesus Christ and his holy law" out of public life would result in continuing discord among people and nations. This solemnity reminds us that while governments come and go, Christ reigns as King forever.

The readings for today provide a rich tapestry of imagery and meaning. In the first reading from the Book of Daniel (Daniel 7:13-14), we encounter a vision of the "Son of Man" who is presented before the Ancient One and receives dominion, glory, and kingship. This passage emphasizes the eternal and universal reign of Christ, highlighting that His authority transcends all earthly powers.

The second reading from the Book of Revelation (Revelation 1:5-8) further affirms this kingship, proclaiming Jesus as the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. It reminds us that Christ's reign is not just a future hope but a present reality that transforms our lives today.

In the Gospel of John (John 18:33-37), we see Jesus standing before Pilate, affirming His kingship in a way that challenges worldly notions of power. Jesus states, "My kingdom is not of this world," indicating that His reign is rooted in truth and love, not in domination or coercion.

Christ's kingship is characterized by service and sacrifice. Unlike earthly rulers who often seek power for their own gain, Christ exemplifies a leadership that is self-giving. He invites us to participate in His kingdom by embodying the values of humility, compassion, and justice. As we reflect on His life, we are called to ask ourselves: How do we live out our allegiance to Christ the King in our daily lives?

The call to discipleship is clear. We are invited to recognize Christ's authority in our hearts and to allow His reign to shape our actions and decisions. This means living in a way that reflects His love and mercy, especially towards those who are marginalized or suffering. As we celebrate this feast, let us commit ourselves to being instruments of His peace and justice in the world.

As we conclude our reflection today, let us remember that Christ the King reigns not only in heaven but also in our hearts. May we strive to live as faithful subjects of His kingdom, allowing His love to guide our actions and inspire our relationships. In doing so, we contribute to the establishment of His kingdom on earth, a kingdom marked by love, truth, and justice. Amen!

Fr. Bula.