

OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, KING OF THE UNIVERSE

St. Luke 23:35-43

Today, the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ King of the Universe, celebrates the close of the Church's year as the Church celebrates the culmination of earth and heaven, all that is and ever was and ever will be in Jesus Christ, universal Lord and Saviour and King of Kings.

This feast is one of the more recent introduced in A.D. 1925 by Pope Pius XI. It was a time of great upheaval in Europe. The First World War had just ended and now Europe saw the rise of totalitarian regimes of communism and fascism. Celebrating Christ as the Universal King serves to remind all men and women that our ultimate allegiance does not belong to any human being or any government, but to God alone who, in Christ, rules all of heaven and earth.

Leaders rise and fall, governments are elected and ousted and overthrown, laws change and standards are simply that which is popularly believed at any particular time. But the reign of Christ is unchanging and His commands are truth whether believed or not. His power is the only enduring power and His authority is the only authority that shall never fail.

In our society many people suffer great injustices which courts and governments are incapable or unwilling to make right. To live in a human society is to live with compromise, of sometimes winning and sometimes losing, where to have more may mean that others have less. There have been attempts throughout human history to form a perfect society, whether it be called Utopia or communism or even democracy, but the only society where there is justice without compromise, where men and women of goodwill live

fully without need or want and where nobody goes without is the Kingdom of God. And it is that kingdom that Christ calls us to make known.

This solemnity serves to remind us that in an age where religion is popularly ridiculed and where the personal opinions of individuals becomes the truth, and truth itself is no longer absolute but relative—so that what is true for me does not have to be true for you—that there is one who is Truth itself, who is above all opinion and speculation, who rules as King of the Universe, not in name but in reality. Truth is not a matter of democracy nor of popularity; truth is not decided by the majority, for if it were then there could be nothing that is true because it would change from society to society and from age to age. The truth that Christ is King above all other kings and queens and presidents and prime ministers is a matter of glory and joy for we are the subjects of Him who is the greatest king.

For us to share in this glorious and everlasting reign of Christ we must share in His reign on earth. This means to share in His suffering, to treat injustice with mercy, to preach the Gospel and be ridiculed, to live faithfully and to be scorned, to have our will give way for the sake of others.

In the Book of Apocalypse, St. John writes that each of us shall be “judged by those things which were written in the books, according to [our] works,” and Christ shall separate us like sheep from goats, and to some He shall say: “Come, you whom my Father has blessed, take for your heritage the kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world,” and to others, “Go away from me, with your curse upon you, to eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels”.

To reign with Christ we must live with Christ and die with Christ so that we may be raised with Christ. We must choose to abandon our pride and to humble ourselves before He who humbled Himself before us, so that we can hang on the cross and say with the good thief, “Remember me when you come into your kingdom,” and we will hear Jesus Christ, the King of the Universe, say to us, “Truly, I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise”.