

## Christ the King Feast

One day a kindergarten teacher nun said to the class of 5-year-olds, "I'll give \$2 to the child who can tell me who was the most famous man who ever lived." An Irish boy put his hand up and said, "It was St. Patrick." The teacher said, "Sorry Sean, that's not correct." Then a Scottish boy put his hand up and said, "It was St. Andrew." The teacher replied, "I'm sorry, Hamish, that's not right either." Finally, a Jewish boy raised his hand and said, "It was Jesus Christ." The teacher said, "That's absolutely right, Marvin, come up here and I'll give you the \$2." As the teacher was giving Marvin his money, she said, "You know Marvin, you being Jewish, I was very surprised you said Jesus Christ." Marvin replied, "Yeah. In my heart I knew it was Moses, but business is business..."

Dear Friends,

Today we celebrate the feast of Christ Jesus, the king of the universe. This is the last week of the liturgical calendar year. This feast was instituted in 1925 by Pope Pius XI. This feast was instituted to strengthen the laity to meditate upon these truths in response to growing secularism and nationalism through his encyclical 'Quas Primas'.

The feast and readings explain the real kingship of Jesus Christ. The title "Christ the King" has its roots both in Scripture and in the whole theology of the Kingdom of God. In most of the Messianic prophecies given in the Old Testament books of Samuel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Daniel, Christ the Messiah is represented as a King.

New Testament texts: 1) In the Annunciation, recorded in Lk 1:32-33, we read: "...and the Lord God will give to Him the throne of His father David, and He will reign over the House of Jacob forever; and of His Kingdom there will be no end." In fact, the Kingdom of God is the center of Jesus' teaching and the phrase "Kingdom of God" occurs in the Gospels 122 times, of which 90 instances are used by Jesus.

2) The Magi from the Far East came to Jerusalem and asked the question: (Mt. 2:2) "Where is the Baby born to be the King of the Jews? We saw His star... and we have come to worship Him. There are more references in the Gospels.

The one point that I would like to reflect with you is the closeness of Jesus with people. No other kings in the history of the world were close with the people. Even though they were doing good things for people, they always lived in the palace. But Jesus lives with the people, and for the people. Jesus, as our king is close to each of us. Not only close to us, but he is one with us. Pope Benedict XVI quotes, "the feast of Christ the King is therefore not a feast of those who are subjugated, but a feast of those who know that they are in the hands of the one who writes straight on crooked lines."

According to Gerry Darring from St. Louis University, "The Kingdom of God is a space. It exists in every home where parents and children love each other. It exists in every region and country that cares for its weak and vulnerable. It exists in every parish that reaches out to the needy.

The Kingdom of God is a time. It happens whenever someone feeds a hungry person, or shelters a homeless person, or shows care to a neglected person. It happens whenever we overturn an unjust law, or correct an injustice, or avert a war. It happens whenever people join in the struggle to overcome poverty, to erase ignorance, to pass on the Faith.

The Kingdom of God is in the past (in the life and work of Jesus of Nazareth); it is in the present (in the work of the Church and in the efforts of many others to create a world of goodness and justice); it is in the future (reaching its completion in the age to come).

The Kingdom of God is a condition. Its symptoms are love, justice, and peace. Jesus Christ is king! We pray today that God may free all the world to rejoice in His peace, to glory in His justice, to live in His love."

Let us create closeness with Jesus Christ, who is the king, and brings the kingdom with love.