

“Our King Of Love”
Feast of Christ the King – October 26, AD 2025
St. John XVIII: 33

How ironic that today’s feast of Christ the King comes a week after our country saw numerous “No King” demonstrations. Whatever your political leanings may be, I think we can agree that the job description of a “king” or “queen” is not highly valued by modern nation states. Sure, there are a few exceptions, but that role has taken on a largely ceremonial function where it still exists. Nevertheless, there is a spiritual “King” that millions around the globe are honoring today—Jesus Christ. It is divine love, not worldly power, that emanates from that King, and leads us to respond in loving adoration to the One whose sacrifice on a Cross liberates us from a sentence of death for our sins. Sin, remember, is an abomination to God.

The interrogation of Jesus by Pilate in today’s Gospel lesson from St. John focuses on a critical question—what is the true nature of our Lord’s identity as a “king”? Is Jesus really an aspiring earthly king who threatens to overthrow the ruling authorities, or is He another type of king altogether whose dominion is a spiritual one, though with real world implications? Of course, we know the answer to that question, but Pilate didn’t. The enemies of Jesus pinned on our Lord the label **“King of the Jews”** in order to bring Him before the Roman system of justice where He could be found guilty as a

traitor to Caesar, and then executed. Jesus refutes that label by telling Pilate that if He were an earthly king His followers would fight to prevent His arrest by the Jewish authorities, and that His kingdom is not of this world. *“To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice,”* says Jesus. To which Pilate cynically replies, *“What is truth?”*

Pilate is deaf to the spiritual truth that is inherent in who Jesus is and what His Kingdom is all about. As the Scriptures attest, God’s plan of salvation for all humanity required a perfect sacrifice to atone for the self-centered disregard of God’s will that humanity has shown ever since Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. The sinless Jesus was obedient to His Father’s will to achieve victory over sin and death by going to the Cross. Paradoxically, the kingly crown that Jesus wore for our sakes was a crown of thorns amid intense suffering. This was a different kind of king altogether than the world has ever known. Our Lord’s great sacrifice of Himself was and is a profound witness to the truth that God is love, despite the attempts of His enemies to mock, humiliate, and torture Him to death, which is what the cruelty of crucifixion was designed by the Romans to do.

Jesus’ witness to the power of divine truth inherent in Him continued with His Resurrection and Ascension to the right hand of God, and the sending of the Holy Ghost. Through these events, the

eyes and ears of Jesus' disciples were fully opened to the truth revealed in Jesus Christ. That truth was recorded by the Spirit-guided writers of the Gospels and Epistles, which the Church has recognized as authoritative revelations from God. As Head of His Body, the Church, Jesus Christ merits the title of **Christ the King** because of His perfect being as God Incarnate; because of all the righteousness, love, and mercy He showed during His earthly ministry; because of His many miracles demonstrating divine power; because of His victory over sin and death on the Cross; and because of the promise of His return in power to judge the world at the end of earthly time.

We have testimony throughout the New Testament that all authority has been given to Jesus Christ, in heaven and in earth. In Chapter 10 of St. Luke, Jesus says:

"All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him." [10: 2]

In Chapter 28 of St. Matthew, right before Jesus gives His disciples the Great Commission, He says: *"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."* [28:17] In Chapter 14 of St. John, Jesus tells His disciples:

"I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him." [14:6-7]

In Chapter 5 of St. John's Gospel, we see Jesus heal a crippled man on the Sabbath. Of course, this angers His enemies who plot to persecute and slay Jesus. Jesus signals He is doing His Father's will by telling them *"My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."* Our Lord's enemies can't abide the thought that He is making Himself equal with God. In response, our Lord adds fuel to the fire with these words:

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel. For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him." [5:18-23]

These are astounding assertions by Jesus. Either He is a madman, or He is who He says He is. Do we hear His voice? Do we hear Him in the many prophecies of a coming anointed redeemer found in the Old Testament? The very first of these, called the *protoevangelium*, appears in Genesis 3:15. Here the Lord God is cursing the serpent, widely interpreted as the fallen angel Satan, for deceiving Eve:

"...and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

Spiritual warfare now begins between demonic forces and humanity, but in God's time, the offspring of a woman, namely the Blessed Virgin Mary, brings Jesus Christ, the new Adam, into human history, and though badly "bruised" Himself, our Lord finally conquers Satan, sin, and death in a glorious and bloody climax. Nothing we have done or can do is worthy of such grace.

Our Lord comes to us at every Eucharist to share His body and blood with us that we might be reconciled to God, and each other, and become worthy heirs of His kingdom. Are we ready to follow the command of **our King of Love** to love as He has loved us? If so, let us affirm once again at His Holy Altar that Jesus Christ is truly "King of kings and Lord of lords." Let us give thanks to the Father, as did St. Paul, that we have been delivered from the "*power of darkness*" and have been "*translated...into the kingdom of his dear Son.*" Then, as His Body, the Church, let us proclaim the truth of His Kingship and work diligently and humbly in His vineyard to bring the fruits of godly love and righteousness into every aspect of life, even the political one. ***Amen.***

And now unto God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, be ascribed all might, majesty, honor and dominion, as is most justly due this day, both now and forever, Amen.