

Christ the King
Last Sunday of the
Liturgical Year



About the Solemnity of Christ the King

Pope Pius IX instituted this feast in 1925 as a response to the rise of totalitarianism. This solemnity celebrates Christ's reign over humanity and human hearts. It strongly emphasizes God's ultimate gift of forgiveness and gives a beautiful preview of Christ's eschatological return and final sovereignty over all creation. This theme of Christ's second coming continues through the first part of Advent, until 17 December, and is part of what we spend the time of Advent preparing for.

This solemnity is celebrated on the last Sunday of the liturgical year and therefore has a twofold nature. Firstly, it serves as a fulfilment of the story as told throughout the liturgical year and leads as a transition back into Advent as we begin a new liturgical year.

How can we apply the solemnity of Christ the King to our life?

Pope Pius IX instituted this feast as a response to the rise of totalitarianism, showing that God's people are not devoid of what happens in the secular world and that we can be shaped and influenced by such happenings as well. At that time, Mussolini was preparing to take power in Italy and there were other people indifferent countries preparing to overthrow the establishment and take control.

Christ's Kingship is the complete antithesis of people like Mussolini. Christ's Kingship is one of example and service. Every group requires a leader, and with leadership like all things in life come joys, together with its challenges and sorrows. Sometimes leaders are called to make difficult decisions. However, true leaders will serve the people in their group with kindness and attend to the needs of others first. They will not use their position to gain more control and power, nor will they use it for self-glorification.

In Year A, the Gospel Reading chosen is that from Saint Matthew's Gospel, which is summed up by the following: "I was naked, and you clothed me; sick, and you visited me." This Gospel emphasizes that Christ's Way is one of selflessness unlike those who orchestrate and prop-up totalitarian regimes.

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Collect

Almighty ever-living God,
whose will is to restore all things
in your beloved Son, the King of the universe,
grant, we pray,
that the whole creation, set free from slavery,
may render your majesty service
and ceaselessly proclaim your praise.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Gospel

Matthew 25:31-46

I was naked and you clothed me; sick, and you visited me

Jesus said to his disciples:

'When the Son of Man comes in his glory,
escorted by all the angels,
then he will take his seat on his throne of glory.
All the nations will be assembled before him
and he will separate men one from another
as the shepherd separates sheep from goats.
He will place the sheep on his right hand and the goats on his left.
Then the King will say to those on his right hand,
"Come, you whom my Father has blessed,
take for your heritage the kingdom prepared for you
since the foundation of the world.
For I was hungry and you gave me food;
I was thirsty and you gave me drink;
I was a stranger and you made me welcome;

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naked and you clothed me, sick and you visited me,
in prison and you came to see me."

Then the virtuous will say to him in reply,

**"Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you;
or thirsty and give you drink?**

When did we see you a stranger and make you welcome;
naked and clothe you; sick or in prison and go to see you?"

And the King will answer,

"I tell you solemnly,

in so far as you did this to one of the least of these brothers of mine,
you did it to me."

'Next he will say to those on his left hand,

**"Go away from me, with your curse upon you,
to the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.**

For I was hungry and you never gave me food;

I was thirsty and you never gave me anything to drink;

I was a stranger and you never made me welcome,

naked and you never clothed me,

sick and in prison and you never visited me."

Then it will be their turn to ask,

**"Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty,
a stranger or naked, sick or in prison, and did not come to your help?"**

Then he will answer,

**"I tell you solemnly, in so far as you neglected to do this to one of the least of these,
you neglected to do it to me."**

'And they will go away to eternal punishment, and the virtuous to eternal life.'

Antiphon

The Lord sits as King for ever. The Lord will bless his people with peace.

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Hymn for the Solemnity of Christ the King

O Christ, our King, you reign now
o'er all the human race.
You reign with great compassion
o'er every time and place.
Christ our King, upon the Cross
with thorns your Holy head was crowned.
Heaven's King, King of earth,
in your Kingship peace be found.

O Christ, our King, anointed,
Only Begotten Son;
the King of all creation,
may Your will e'er be done.
Christ our King, upon the Cross
with thorns your Holy head was crowned.
Heaven's King, King of earth,
in your Kingship peace be found.

O Christ, the Priest eternal
and sacrifice of peace
offered now on this altar,
whose Kingdom shall not cease.
Christ our King, upon the Cross
with thorns your Holy head was crowned.
Heaven's King, King of earth,
in your Kingship peace be found.

(Year A)
O Christ, our King, you judge us
on whether we have shared
our time, treasure and talent
and for others have cared.
Christ our King, open our eyes
to combine action and prayer
for neighbours in their need
making our world just and fair.

Text: Chris deSilva and Alessio Loiacono

Other Music Suggestion

[Because the Lord is My Shepherd](#)

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