

A Jewish boy was lazy in his studies. He misbehaved in the public school, so, his parents enrolled him in a Catholic school. Very soon his conduct changed: his grades were up, and by the end of the year, he was the best student in class.

Astonished at this transformation, his parents asked him what happened. He said, “On the first day I walked into the school, I saw a man nailed to a cross. I knew they meant business here. I knew that you couldn’t fool around and get away with it.”

Today’s readings remind us that the man on the cross is not an object to frighten naughty kids but the king of the universe and the savior of the world. Today’s feast reminds us that we are citizens of the heavenly kingdom and that Christ is the king of our lives.

It was Pope Pius XI who instituted this feast to be observed on the last Sunday of October. It was Vatican II that moved the feast to the last Sunday of the liturgical year to signify the coming of Christ as the universal king and judge at the end of times. We heard about that in the first and second readings. This king is loving, compassionate, and forgiving. He has a liberating mission. He frees us from all types of bondage. He teaches us how to live in this world, and then how to live happily in the heavenly kingdom. It is through Him that everything was created. He longs to be the king of our hearts and the king of our families.

Susan had a hard time with one of her boys who was very strong-willed. She tried many things to get him to listen to her and to calm him down. But none were successful. Frustrated, she asked, “Bryan, who is in charge here?” Without missing a beat he said, “Jesus is. You are not, Mom.” Let us invite Jesus to be the king of our minds and hearts.

In establishing this feast in 1925, the Pope’s first intent was to draw the minds and hearts of people away from materialism—to spiritual values instead. But, many did not pay attention—especially in our country. They went after material wealth and possessions. So, the inevitable happened. The stock market crashed on Thursday, October 24, 1929. This can happen again if we let greed, materialism, and militant secularism guide our thoughts and actions. We need to reject these values, and embrace the Gospel values of truth, justice, and life.

Militant secularism has paganized Europe. There is very little faith there, and so there are more pagans than practicing believers. We do not want to go down that road. Secularists want us to believe that we are the king of our lives, and there is nothing beyond.



Materialism tries to build a world of comfort, pleasure, and wealth here in this world.

The second intent of the Pope was to present the world with a model king. The kings of this world lead us to wars, death, and destruction. But, Christ the King is different. He leads us to true peace and joy. We share in the kingship of Christ by our baptism. What does that mean? Christ is a king with a difference, and that explains it all. How is He different?

First, He is a Shepherd King. He is one who goes after the lost one. He is prepared to give His life for His sheep. He rejoices in the return of a repentant sinner. He protects us. He

cares for us. Do you have a heart for the strayed? Do you seek out the lost? Do you have compassion for those struggling with their own demons? Do you invite the lapsed to return?

Second, He is a Servant King. He said, “If you wish to be first, you should be last of all and the servant of all” (Matthew 9:35). “The first will be last, and the last will be first.” As a servant, you are either serving the master or serving material wealth. We cannot serve both God and wealth. As a Servant King, He is detached from all possessions. “Unless you renounce all you have, you cannot be my disciples.” “If you wish to be perfect, go and sell all you have, and come and follow me.” The cross is His throne, and the Sermon on the Mount is His rule of law.

St. Elizabeth, who was the queen of Hungary, refused to wear her golden crown in the church. When asked why, she said, “When my Savior and King wears a crown of thorns, how can I wear a crown of gold?”

Christ served His heavenly Father by serving us and dying for us. Do you serve God and your brothers and sisters? Or, do you serve for material wealth?

Third, He is our Savior King. As our Savior, He is the king of our hearts. He wishes to reign supreme in our hearts. Salvation of our souls is His priority.

How concerned are you about the salvation of others? And what are you doing about it?

Let us pledge our allegiance to Christ our King:

*I pledge allegiance to Christ, the King.
I embrace His Eternal and Universal Kingdom.
I acknowledge His Kingdom to be one of
Truth, Life, Justice, Holiness, and Grace.
I wish to do what I can through prayer
and action to bring to the world
His kingdom of justice, love, and peace.*