

For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

In instituting the Feast of Christ the King, Pope Pius XI wrote: “for all men, whether collectively or individually, are under the dominion of Christ. In him is the salvation of the individual, in him is the salvation of society. ‘Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given to men whereby we must be saved.’ He is the author of happiness and true prosperity for every man and for every nation. ‘For a Nation is happy when its citizens are happy.’”¹

It matters not if I am an individualist or tend to the communitarian – salvation is only possible through Jesus Christ. It is not a matter of proving myself or being able to embrace the equality of the collective. If Jesus Christ is not above everything else in my life, if I do not “allow” Him to be King of my heart...

In the culture at large, when the Author of Life is excluded as the first principle by which rights and obligations are derived, “the very basis of that authority [that has been expressed in society] has been taken away, because the chief reason of the distinction between ruler and subject has been eliminated. The result is that human society is tottering to its fall, because it has no longer a secure and solid foundation.”² It matters not whether the “authority” is a monarchy or a social democracy – if Christ is not at the center and *acknowledged* as such – the weight of a conviction stands upon the weight of that generation alone. Have we not seen this in our own day? If we eliminate the Lord as the foundational principle for a constitutional democracy, the very constitution can be reinterpreted, upended, in each successive generation to mean something else.

How might Christ reign in our midst? The pontiff’s recommendation is rather simple: “That these blessings [evils cured; law gains its former authority; peace restored] may be abundant and lasting in Christian society, it is necessary that the kingship of our Savior should be as widely as possible recognized and understood, and to the end nothing would serve better than the institution of **a special feast in honor of the Kingship of Christ**. For people are instructed in the truths of faith, and brought to appreciate the inner joys of religion far more effectually by the annual celebration of our sacred mysteries than by any official pronouncement of the teaching of the Church.”³

¹ Pius XI, *Quas primas*, 18.

² Pius XI, *Ubi Arcano*, quoted in *Quas primas*, 18.

³ Pius XI, *QUas primas*, 21.

Is this not true? Do we not remember the festival and the various aspects of it? Do we not recall the color, the music, the sights and smells? Do we not remember various celebrations with a certain vividness? We see it all the time at St. Joseph School – when we address the feast, the aspects that make it up, there is an organic connection with the truths of the mysteries that are celebrated. The youth might not initially be concerned with the names and formal descriptions, but rehashed time and again and it begins to stick and then belief and adherence begin to take root.

This is why we see conversions occurring at the school – not because we are telling youth they must come into the Church. No, they begin to believe because the beauty of the truth is put before them, then they learn the truth and want to commit to it, in a way that is appropriate for their age.

What converts? Beauty. What invites? Goodness. Why does someone commit? Truth. Something is attractive, I am bidden by it, its substance “forces” me to remain.

Is your submission to Jesus Christ beautiful to behold, or is it terrifying? Does your embrace of Christianity invite others or make them wonder what you are doing? Does the Dogma live loudly in you, as a certain Supreme Court Justice was accused not too long ago, or is it a cafeteria-Catholicism?

Here’s the thing, He will “reign” until all are subdued. What does that mean. He is going to keep pursuing you until you are set free. The same goes for the loved ones that make your heart ache. What an amazing God we have that we might be subjected to Him.

May we strive to make our lives worthy for a King to reign within this week.

As we anticipate Thanksgiving Day and various festivities, may Jesus Christ the King of the Universe be placed at the center by the head of the household. May He intercede for you during this difficult time of restriction and doubt. May your festivities draw others to conversion for the sake of souls.

Please be assured of my prayers this week.

- Fr. Capuano