

**Father Joseph's Homily**  
**34<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – CHRIST THE KING**

My dear brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ, we are on the last Sunday of the Liturgical year, the Feast of Christ the King. This feast was established by Pope Pius XI in 1925. In the history of the Church, liturgical feasts have been instituted in answer to particular needs that arise in the life of the world & Church. This Feast of Christ the King was in response to the grave and disturbing situation of the world. The world in 1925 was still recovering from the devastating effects of the First World War, and human reason alone was considered to have enough power and capability for unlimited progress. Human societies were abandoning Christian values, and sought to do away with divine and spiritual dimensions of life. It is at the height of this secularization of the world that we were presented with this great Feast of Christ the King.

Human progress gives the false sense that humans have absolute power over all forces in the universe. Scientific technology makes us believe that any discoveries and inventions are manmade. The human mind is considered to have capabilities that can overcome and defy any limitations. But this feast reminds us that Christ still reigns above all. He alone is the source of every intelligence and intellect. He is the powerhouse of every discovery and invention. He is the ultimate end in conquering any problems or difficulties.

The Kingdom of Christ the King is under severe threat again today. The forces of materialism and consumerism have clouded the minds of several with riches and pleasures. The forces of sensualism and sensationalism have corrupted many innocent hearts, and have

destroyed many simple minds. The forces of authoritarianism and individualism have shattered many families and communities. The forces of relativism and atheism are raging strongly against the practice of faith and the teachings of the Church.

As Christians, we are soldiers who belong to the Kingdom of God, with Christ as our King. A soldier ought to be deeply convinced and highly passionate of one's King and Kingdom. As a Christian, am I deeply convinced of my faith and love for Christ and His Kingdom? As a Christian, am I passionately and enthusiastically living out my Christian virtues in this world?

As this Crucified King's soldiers, we too are invited to be sharers in the Cross of Christ. It is said that people who are crucified with Christ will have three distinct marks:

1. They can only look in one direction....
2. They can never turn back...
3. They no longer have plans of their own.

And these three characteristics ought to reflect in our Christian lives.

“Looking in one direction” means being totally focused on Jesus and His kingdom

“Never turn back” means never to turn back from our commitment and get attracted to the ways of the world.

“No plans of their own” means giving up any of our personal goals and agenda which can deter us from God's will.

Today's gospel teaches us about the main criteria of the Last Judgment. The parable tells us that Christ, the Judge, is going to ask us six questions, all based on how we have cooperated with God's grace in showing charity, kindness and mercy toward others, through whom we are actually serving Jesus Christ.

The first set of questions: I was hungry, thirsty, homeless. Did you give me food, drink, accommodation? The second set of questions: I was naked, sick, imprisoned. Did you clothe me? Did you help me by visiting me? If we answer "yes," we will be eternally rewarded because we have cooperated with God's grace. But if the answer to any of the questions is "no," we will be eternally punished.

In Mt 2:2, we see another important question, "Where is the (newborn) King of the Jews?" The answer to this question will be found at the end of the Gospel, with Jesus hanging on the Cross and a statement which reads in Mt 27:37, "This is the King of the Jews" Where the Cross is, there is Christ the King. Where the lost, the sinful, the abandoned and the lonely are, there is Christ the King. Where the poor, the suffering, the miserable and the abused are, there is Christ the King.

My brothers and sisters, let us pray with renewed vigor and invite Christ the King to take reign in our hearts, in our families, in our country and in our world!