



Bringing Home the Word

Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe (B)
November 21, 2021

Feeble, Fleeting Human Glory

By Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

In the eighteenth century, Lorenzo Sabbatini painted an amazing ceiling mural at the Vatican of Christ the King ascended in heavenly glory. Have you heard of the artist? He and his art were sought after by the wealthiest, most powerful people of his day—so famous then, but unknown today. Thus is the feeble nature of human glory.

In today's Gospel, Jesus is in chains at the mercy of Pontius Pilate. The Roman procurator failed to recognize him. Thus is the feeble nature of human recognition. Pilate had before him the King of Kings, the author of all authority in heaven and on earth, his maker and

judge. It appeared that Pilate was the powerful one, but Jesus knew all power really came from his Father. Thus, the feeble nature of vision without faith.

The elaborate scene painted by Sabbatini is what we should always keep in mind—Jesus taken up into the clouds as he blesses us. Cherubs dance and celebrate the return of the King, their fearless leader, who faced all the forces of hell and emerged victorious. He has taken his rightful throne and they are rejoicing at having him back. He still reigns from there today.

He has opened the gates of heaven so all his beloved can now enter and populate the mansions prepared for them from the dawn of time. We may often feel like victims of circumstances or totally limited by our failures, health, or enemies. Yet, we are more than conquerors if we allow ourselves to be set free by the truth of Christ's kingship. +

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Sunday Readings

Daniel 7:13-14

His dominion is an everlasting dominion / that shall not pass away.

Revelation 1:5-8

"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "the one who is and who was and who is to come."

John 18:33b-37

Jesus answered [Pilate], "You say I am a king. For this I was born and for this I came into the world."

A Word from Pope Francis

Jesus asks us to allow him to become our king...But we must not forget that Jesus' kingdom is not of this world. He will give new meaning to our life—at times even put us to difficult tests through our mistakes and our sins—merely on the condition that we not follow the logics of the world and of its "kings."

—Angelus, November 25, 2018



REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- Do I judge people superficially or with a vision enlightened by the gospel?
- How can I truthfully and faithfully judge situations, and help others do the same?

Bothering God

By Kathleen M. Basi

Anxiety is a reality in modern life. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, almost 18 percent of adults in the United States suffer from it. And that figure comes only from diagnosable cases—not the average anxiety we all cope with at one time or another.

I've been thinking about this lately as it begins to manifest in my children. It reminds me that for two years in junior high I journaled my way through feeling unloved and worthless, convinced that the world would be better off if I just died.

I journaled, but I never asked for help. I didn't tell my parents, and I don't remember ever praying about it. On some level, I thought I had no right to bother God with my problems.

You might shake your head at the idea that anyone could think a major depressive episode is unworthy of God's attention. After all, "Even the hairs of your head have all been counted" (Luke 12:7). Yet how many times do we do the same? Budgets are cut and layoffs are threatened, triggering anxiety. Daily schedules become oppressive. Children make fledgling flights from the nest, causing parents to worry about safety.

Sometimes we pray about these things, but too often we focus on ourselves for answers—our own strength, our own ability to solve the problem. How easy it is to forget that we



accomplish nothing on our own, but that all things are realized through Christ who strengthens us (see Philippians 4:13).

As a parent whose children are beginning to experience the anxieties of life, I find this thought particularly poignant. So often, they internalize their worries. They try to bear burdens that are far too big for them, for fear of bothering me. And yet I ache for them—I long for them to ask me for help. When they bring me their deepest concerns, it draws us closer together. I can share the wisdom of experience—or, in some cases, simply validate theirs.

If this is how I feel about my children,

how much more must God long for us to reach out to him with the heartaches and anxieties that suck the joy from our lives? Yes, the practicalities will always be ours to put into action, but praying through them brings us closer to God, the source of our strength and the inspiration for all the best that lies within us.

By all means, bother God. He's waiting for you to lean on him. +

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PRAYER

Lord, I am grateful that you are the way, the truth, and the life. Help me to be faithful to the truth of the Gospel.

—From *Grateful Meditations for Every Day in Ordinary Time*, Rev. Warren J. Savage and Mary Ann McSweeney

WEEKDAY READINGS

November 22–27

Monday, St. Cecilia:

Dn 1:1–6, 8–20 / Lk 21:1–4

Tuesday, Weekday: Dn 2:31–45 / Lk 21:5–11

Wednesday, St. Andrew Dũng-Lac and

Companions: Dn 5:1–6, 13–14, 16–17, 23–28 / Lk 21:12–19

Thursday, Weekday:

Dn 6:12–28 / Lk 21:20–28

Friday, Weekday:

Dn 7:2–14 / Lk 21:29–33

Saturday, Weekday:

Dn 7:15–27 / Lk 21:34–36

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