

**BULLETIN REFLECTION by Father Rody**  
**NOV. 21, 2021...CHRIST THE KING...JN 18, 33b-37**

**33** So Pilate went back into the praetorium and summoned Jesus and said to him, **“Are you the King of the Jews?”**

What do we have in mind whenever we hear the word ‘king’? What is our concept of a king?

While giving an orientation to new applicants of altar server in my last parish in the Philippines, I raised the question ‘why do you serve during the mass?’ Some said...because it’s a mass...priest needs helpers...one said it is because we are your servants and you are our king. This answer caught my attention and I went further to get more from them, they said;

- king wears fabulous dress...*Fr. give us some Hanes or fruit of the loom white shirts*
- king has delicious food...*Fr. they offer fruits, corn beef, sardines, noodles let’s eat Fr*
- king has money...*Fr. people give you envelopes*
- king is powerful...*Fr. they listen to you and obey you*
- king has an army and servants...*altar servers are servants/army of Fr. King Rody LOL...*

Is this the kind of kingship our Lord Jesus Christ had shown us? Let me bring you the parable of the Good Shepherd (**Jn. 10, 1-18**). This parable will correct and give us right understanding of the Kingship of our Lord Jesus Christ. In addition to that concept of kingship, let us read **MT. 20, 28** Just so, the Son of Man ***did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.***”

Kingship then by virtue of these two passages is always to look after the welfare of the constituents...constituents are always the first priority and not the self. This is what we are celebrating now, Jesus Christ the King...Our Lord is telling us **‘Hey mankind just remember, you are my number one priority, see I gave up my life because of you...’**

*Let us pray for the Conversion of the World & for Peace*

## 34<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – Christ the King.....by Father Dave

Every now and then when I am with a group of people in a deep discussion, sometimes the topic of one's ancestry will surface. "So, Father, what are you?" is the question to me. "What do you mean?" is my immediate response – even though I know what they're trying to find out about me. "What nationality are you?" is what they follow with. And my response – not what they are looking for – is "I am a Catholic and a Christian first, then a citizen of the United States, of Polish and Prussian heritage." "So!" they'll say, "then you're a Pollock!" "No" I'll say, "Maybe you didn't hear me. I am a Catholic and a Christian first, a citizen of America of Polish and Prussian heritage. I pay my taxes to the United States, not Poland. Therefore I consider myself an American before Polish – not that I'm ashamed of my roots – I'm not. But I think we need to be proud of the land in which we live first."

Today as we celebrate the Solemnity of Christ the King of Heaven and Earth, we may want to contemplate who we give our allegiance to first and foremost.

In 1925, then Pope Pius XI instituted this liturgical feast day in the Church's calendar because he saw the oppressive conditions imposed on people by totalitarian regimes. Kings and monarchs had, for centuries, entered into wars which, in many instances, were the result of their lust for greater power over their subjects. Fascism and communism were on the rise. Various other "isms" were claiming ownership and control over people, efforts we still see in the world today.

Pope Pius XI saw that God was being pushed out of the minds and hearts of people by oppressive political systems claiming that individual humans were the property of the state. Sound Familiar? Today, human life is often seen as belonging under the power of humanity, not under the reign of God. To Whom, then do we belong? To Whom do we claim our allegiance? Who is worthy of our commitments?

As Christians and as Catholics, every time we pray the Lord's Prayer we petition God: "*Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on Earth as it is in Heaven.*" What do those prayerful words mean to you? They should raise questions as to Whom we belong and to Whom we give our ultimate allegiance/ & if we work at doing God's will at all times.

The independence of these United States of America was declared by affirming: "*We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men (people) are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.*"

Our nation's founders recognized that no king, no ruler or president confers human rights. These are given to us by God and by God alone. Perhaps that concept does not seem to be very bold to us today, but it was groundbreaking at the time, and was the foundation of the Declaration of Independence. Maybe we should renew those words.

Regardless of which country we live in, or have our ancestry, we are always citizens in God's Kingdom first. We should, then, pray that we always speak the truth and favor life, strive for holiness and seek God's grace, while at all times seeking justice, sharing love and striving for peace.

The scene in today's Gospel passage from John is one of the most politically charged scenes in all of Scripture. It shows Jesus before Pilate. It is an exchange concerning the nature of power and authority and truth. For Pilate, power and authority have been procured with military might; the claim of Jesus to be a king must have struck Pilate as absurd. Jesus, however, claims that He has true authority, the authority that derives from Truth – a claim that Pilate struggles with by asking the question "What is Truth?" before giving in to the crowd and sending Jesus off to be crucified.

You and I are not citizens of imperial Rome. But in reflecting on Jesus before Pilate, we should remember that even good nations like our own United States of America have turned their backs on Truth for the sake of political expediency (or "political correctness").

Today's Feast should stir us to thinking about our loyalties. There is, of course, nothing wrong with loving one's homeland. But as disciples of Jesus, the true ruler of all, our primary loyalty must be to Christ and the Truth from which His power flows.

Jesus Christ has established God's Kingdom here on Earth. With Christ as the King and Ruler of our lives and hearts, we are charged with continuing to build up God's Kingdom on Earth by working for justice and peace, being good stewards of God's creation – the environment, and treating all those whom we encounter with kindness, love and compassion.