

- Well...today we celebrate the last Sunday of the liturgical year—the solemnity of Christ the King...
- ...in our faith and hope anticipating the second and final coming of Christ—when, as the prophet Daniel tells us—“*All peoples, nations, and languages serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion.*”
- ...a time when God will be everything for everyone who has loved Him, followed His commandments and His moral laws, and also has loved and aided his neighbor in need...as we just heard Jesus affirm as a requisite for eternal life.
- ...a time when, as it says in Revelation: “*God himself will be with [His people]; he will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things [will] have passed away.*” (Revelation 21:3-4)
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- The title “king” for Jesus simply gives us a reference and a rather simplistic analogy...the Church utilizing the title “King of the Universe”...simply meaning ruler of “all that is...all that exists”.
- But...Jesus is much, much more than that.
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- God is not only ruler, but creator—and sustainer—of all existence.
- As a dream does not exist without the dreamer, we cannot exist without being “held” and sustained in the mind of God.
- Psalm 33 says: “*...he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood forth.*” (Psalm 33:9) Likewise He said: “Let there be Bob, or Bill, or Pam, or Patsy...and that person—you—came to be.
- Now St. Paul also writes: “*...in Him all things hold together...*” (Colossians 1:17), and Peter writes: “*...the day of the Lord will come... and then the heavens will pass away...and the elements will be dissolved with fire...*” (2 Peter 3:10)
- Imagine the forces which hold matter together...knowing that, as governor of Creation, God could eliminate those forces...and

then...poof! We, and all matter, would become almost immediately a soup of energy. And yet even energy must have a source.

- Whatever mechanism He uses, it will nevertheless be the final judgment—the fulfillment of God’s kingdom...and that is certainly what is important to each of us.
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- And yet...despite our utter dependence upon God for our very existence, He loves us so very dearly...and even desperately...as we see as He suffers on a cross for us as a visible, adamant and even shameless affirmation to Heaven and earth of His love.
- This is why the crucifix in our houses, offices, cars, etc.—to keep that realization of God’s love always before us...a reminder to help us remain faithful...like the wedding ring on a spouse’s hand.

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- We often wonder: WHY such love? Why, with all my sinful rebellions...with my infidelities and insults to His majesty...why does He still love us so much?
 - Why do I still enjoy His favor as to be His child...a child of His Church?...so undeserving, and yet offered the gift of eternity with Him?
 - Such is the graciousness...the magnanimity...the love...of the king...not only to offer this salvation to us...but to die for each of us to obtain it, so that each of us might live...taking upon Himself the punishment due us for our infidelity.
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 - Our offenses against the infinitely good God and against one another demands justice...or else Good would not be fulfilled.
 - That’s where, in the infinite mercy of God...of Jesus...enters, offering Himself in our place to complete of that infinite good—infinite justice.
 - And that’s why to accept Christ and His teaching is our acceptance of God’s offer of mercy.
 - A man may be offered the governor’s pardon, and he must accept or reject that pardon. If rejected, there is no recourse except that—in justice—the sentence and punishment proceeds.

- And so...we again hear the words of the book of Sirach: “*If you will, you can keep the commandments, and to act faithfully is a matter of your own choice...Before a man are life and death, and whichever he chooses will be given to him.*” (15:15ff). This is what will be.
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- Our duty as this king’s subjects—a privilege in itself—is to heed Him faithfully...to reflect Christ’s love and mercy to the world. To love God above all, and to love our neighbor as ourselves. To adhere to the Church—the teacher—He established to guide us.
- ...for words alone do not save us. Christ said: “*Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father...*” (Matthew 7:21)
- And so Jesus Himself said “*Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. You will know them by their fruits.*” (Matthew 7:19-20)
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- So...above all, as Jesus tells us: “*...seek first [God’s] kingdom and his righteousness, and all...things shall be yours as well.*” (Matthew 6:33)
- As we enter the Advent season and anticipate Christmas, let us act upon the words of St. Paul: “*... whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.*”(Philippians 4:8)
- Yes, Jesus is King, now and forever...as Paul also assures us: “*When we cry, ‘Abba! Father!’ it is the Spirit himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God...heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him...*” (Romans 8:15-1)
- “*...[for] God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*” (Philippians 2:9-11)
- Amen

The Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe

Reading 1EZ 34:11-12, 15-17

Thus says the Lord GOD:
I myself will look after and tend my sheep.
As a shepherd tends his flock
when he finds himself among his scattered sheep,
so will I tend my sheep.
I will rescue them from every place where they were scattered
when it was cloudy and dark.
I myself will pasture my sheep;
I myself will give them rest, says the Lord GOD.
The lost I will seek out,
the strayed I will bring back,
the injured I will bind up,
the sick I will heal,
but the sleek and the strong I will destroy,
shepherding them rightly.

As for you, my sheep, says the Lord GOD,
I will judge between one sheep and another,
between rams and goats.

Responsorial PsalmPS 23:1-2, 2-3, 5-6

R. (1) **The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.**
The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.
In verdant pastures he gives me repose.
R. **The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.**
Beside restful waters he leads me;
he refreshes my soul.
He guides me in right paths
for his name's sake.
R. **The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.**
You spread the table before me
in the sight of my foes;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
R. **The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.**
Only goodness and kindness follow me
all the days of my life;
and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD
for years to come.
R. **The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.**

Reading [21 COR 15:20-26, 28](#)

Brothers and sisters:
Christ has been raised from the dead,
the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.
For since death came through man,
the resurrection of the dead came also through man.
For just as in Adam all die,
so too in Christ shall all be brought to life,
but each one in proper order:
Christ the firstfruits;
then, at his coming, those who belong to Christ;
then comes the end,
when he hands over the kingdom to his God and Father,
when he has destroyed every sovereignty
and every authority and power.
For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.
The last enemy to be destroyed is death.
When everything is subjected to him,
then the Son himself will also be subjected
to the one who subjected everything to him,
so that God may be all in all.

Alleluia [MK 11:9, 10](#)

R. **Alleluia, alleluia.**
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!
Blessed is the kingdom of our father David that is to come!

R. **Alleluia, alleluia.**
Gospel [MT 25:31-46](#)

Jesus said to his disciples:
"When the Son of Man comes in his glory,
and all the angels with him,
he will sit upon his glorious throne,
and all the nations will be assembled before him.
And he will separate them one from another,
as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.
He will place the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.
Then the king will say to those on his right,
'Come, you who are blessed by my Father.
Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.
For I was hungry and you gave me food,
I was thirsty and you gave me drink,
a stranger and you welcomed me,
naked and you clothed me,
ill and you cared for me,
in prison and you visited me.'

Then the righteous will answer him and say,
'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you,
or thirsty and give you drink?
When did we see you a stranger and welcome you,
or naked and clothe you?
When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you?'
And the king will say to them in reply,
'Amen, I say to you, whatever you did
for one of the least brothers of mine, you did for me.'
Then he will say to those on his left,
'Depart from me, you accursed,
into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.
For I was hungry and you gave me no food,
I was thirsty and you gave me no drink,
a stranger and you gave me no welcome,
naked and you gave me no clothing,
ill and in prison, and you did not care for me.'
Then they will answer and say,
'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty
or a stranger or naked or ill or in prison,
and not minister to your needs?'
He will answer them, 'Amen, I say to you,
what you did not do for one of these least ones,
you did not do for me.'
And these will go off to eternal punishment,
but the righteous to eternal life."