

- Well...today we have the last Sunday of the Church year—the Solemnity of Christ the King...anticipating the coming of Christ at the end of time...when, as the prophet Daniel related in our first reading —“*All peoples, nations, and languages serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion.*”
- It is the time coming when God will be all in all...everything for everyone who has loved God, followed His commandments and His moral laws, and has loved and helped his neighbor: has followed those two great commandments of Jesus.
- ...and each hour is one hour closer...each day, one day nearer.

- 
- As much as people try to make it so, this world—this life—is not our final end...thanks be to God!
  - We are simply on the road to our final end, just as the Exodus Israelites traversed the harshness of the desert. But, what we do in the here and now has eternal repercussions.
  - 
  - We can waste time dwelling on when Christ will come, and when the world comes to its end as we know it. Many do.
  - We can dwell on the mechanics of what will happen when Christ comes; many do...concerned with numbers, the so-called “left-behind”, etc.
  - But how it will happen matters little, because what God decrees will happen regardless.
  - And Jesus Himself tells us that we cannot know when He will come, so it’s just best to be ready always.
  - Christ will come, or our own death will come; either way, we stand before Him to give an account of what we have done—or failed to do—in our lives...how well we have lived His two great commandments.
  - Thus, the logically wisest course is simply faithful preparedness...to live each day as if were our last.
  - Jesus tells us such so many times in the Gospels, as when He says: “*Watch, for you do not know when the master of the house will come... lest he come suddenly and find you asleep.*” (Mark 13:35-36)

- ...or in the three parables of Matthew 25—a microcosm of the standards of judgment: the parables of the talents given to servants to invest, the wise prepared and foolish unprepared maids awaiting the bridegroom’s arrival, and the *pièce de résistance*...the parable of the sheep and goats—the sheep who aided the needy, and the goats who did not...the sheep entering the kingdom, and the goats the eternal fire.

- 
- Explicating the revelation of scripture the Church teaches that we will experience two judgments:
  - The first judgment: personal, individual judgment, occurring immediately at death...when all opportunity to form ourselves in the image of Christ is over, and we stand before God with our life’s history—our merits in virtue, and our moral failures...
  - ...yet our judge being the best of judges...the eternal King of Kings, our Creator—Christ himself...gauging how faithfully we have followed His Word and example—He who is consubstantial with Father and Holy Spirit—the Spirit who has guided us with grace all of our lives.
  - Then--at the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Christ--the General Judgment with the Resurrection of the Dead, when all people who have ever existed will be judged together...manifesting God’s absolute justice and mercy to all—mercy for those who followed Christ and sought to live Godly lives, and justice for those who did not.
  - 
  - Some believe that, at that judgment, the repercussions of all our actions will be shown to us.
    - ...such as the help offered to the young woman, inspiring her to teach hundreds of school children their faith...some of whom went on to be faithful Catholics, or nuns, or priests, etc., spreading the faith throughout the world. All because of your small sacrifice.
    - Or, negatively, that person you despised, who thereafter lost his faith and became evil—because of you.
  - 
  - Thus, we must train ourselves to be aware...to have every action work for good as best we know...as St. Paul urges: “*Let all bitterness and*

*wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, with all malice, and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.” (Ephesians 4:31-32)*

- After all...is this forgiveness not what we hope to receive from Christ at our judgment?
  - If so, we must remember His words: “*...if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*” (Matthew 6:14-15)
  - 
  - Of course...all is our choice; we have free will...and with it comes the capacity of decision that gives our lives eternal character.
  - And thus...we remember 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. For great is the wisdom of the Lord; ... he knows every deed of man.*” (Sirach 15:15ff)
  - Heaven is not golden streets, strumming harps in boredom perched on clouds for all eternity.
  - Heaven is being enfolded into God our Creator...filling of the emptiness that we have within us...the end of our “separate-ness” so as to come together with God and with our fellow faithful in the absolute immersion of love for which we are created.
  - This world is insufficient to supply such love; only God is the infinite love for which we long.
- 
- As next Sunday begins Advent and the new Church year, let’s renew our dedication to God and to good...to become true servants of the only REAL king...the Heavenly King.
  - ...and as the Church’s New Year arrives, let us renew our own trust in God, and seek to follow those two great commandments: *Love the Lord with all your being, and your neighbor as yourself.*

- Because Jesus tells us: “...*seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well.*” (Matthew 6:33)
- 

- So...to quote the book of Revelation: “*To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father...to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.*” (Revelation 1:5)

The Solemnity of Christ the King

Reading 1

[Dn 7:13-14](#)

As the visions during the night continued, I saw  
one like a Son of man coming,  
on the clouds of heaven;  
when he reached the Ancient One  
and was presented before him,  
the one like a Son of man received dominion, glory, and kingship;  
**all peoples, nations, and languages serve him.**  
His dominion is an everlasting dominion  
that shall not be taken away,  
his kingship shall not be destroyed.

Responsorial Psalm

[Ps 93:1, 1-2, 5](#)

R. (1a) **The LORD is king; he is robed in majesty.**

The LORD is king, in splendor robed;  
robed is the LORD and girt about with strength.

R. **The LORD is king; he is robed in majesty.**

And he has made the world firm,  
not to be moved.

Your throne stands firm from of old;  
from everlasting you are, O LORD.

R. **The LORD is king; he is robed in majesty.**

Your decrees are worthy of trust indeed;  
holiness befits your house,  
O LORD, for length of days.

R. **The LORD is king; he is robed in majesty.**

Reading II

[Rv 1:5-8](#)

Jesus Christ is the faithful witness,  
the firstborn of the dead and ruler of the kings of the earth.  
To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood,  
who has made us into a kingdom, priests for his God and Father,  
to him be glory and power forever and ever. Amen.

Behold, he is coming amid the clouds,  
and every eye will see him,  
even those who pierced him.  
All the peoples of the earth will lament him.  
Yes. Amen.

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

Gospel

[Jn 18:33b-37](#)

Pilate said to Jesus,  
"Are you the King of the Jews?"  
Jesus answered, "Do you say this on your own  
or have others told you about me?"  
Pilate answered, "I am not a Jew, am I?  
Your own nation and the chief priests handed you over to me.  
What have you done?"  
Jesus answered, "My kingdom does not belong to this world.  
If my kingdom did belong to this world,  
my attendants would be fighting  
to keep me from being handed over to the Jews.  
But as it is, my kingdom is not here."  
So Pilate said to him, "Then you are a king?"  
Jesus answered, "You say I am a king.  
For this I was born and for this I came into the world,  
to testify to the truth.  
Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice."