

## **Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ the King C2022**

Today we celebrate the Solemnity of Christ the King of the universe. Starting with this Sunday our Archdiocese of Denver has requested a series of teachings on the renewal of the Eucharist. Christ the King is also Christ the companion of every day who has left us the Eucharist as the sacrament of our Salvation.

From the outset, let us ask these questions: What do we mean by saying Christ is King? How do we conceive of his Kingdom? What are its extension and its limits? A comparison with the existing Kingdoms of the earth, like the United Kingdom, the kingdom of Spain, Belgium, Holland or others, can help us grasp the distinctiveness of Christ as King and of his Kingdom.

The main trends by which we recognize the Kingdoms of the earth are very visible: the existence of a territory, an army, a government, and the people on whom the monarch reigns. Those elements are limited in space and in extension so that the United Kingdom cannot be reduced to the Kingdom of Belgium, or the Kingdom of Holland claims to be the Kingdom of Spain. They are all different and existing in the limits of their territories. No King can claim his kingship beyond his territory.

However, when we talk about Jesus as King, we don't see a visible territory on which he reigns, an army he commands or a government he leads. Jesus' Kingdom is of another form and another type. When at his Passion, Pilate asked Jesus if he was a king, he acknowledged that he was. But, immediately he added that his kingdom was not of this world. That Jesus was a King is also what read on the inscription above his cross: "This is the King of the Jews".

Today's readings show us, each in its own way, an aspect of that Kingdom of Jesus. First, we have the book of Samuel. Its focus is on the kingship of David. Let us confess that, in the past as it is today, the exercise of power has always been difficult in human history. The performance of many kings in the exercise of their leadership has often been below the expectations placed in them. It has been proven that the accession to power does not mean necessarily capacity of being a good leader.

In the presence of much disappointment from the kings of Israel, God raised David to be the model of king according to his heart. What makes David special is that, unlike his predecessors, he was animated with a deep love of God and a sincere zeal for his people. He was a gatherer and a true shepherd of God's people.

Those particular traits of David will be found in Jesus. St Paul presents Jesus in his letter to the Colossians as the one in whose kingdom we are transferred, and in whom we have redemption and the forgiveness of our sins. His kingdom obeys other laws and other rules different from those of human Kingdoms.

That kingdom of Jesus we start it right now by living the values of fraternal love, humble service and charity. We cannot celebrate the feast of Christ the king without asking ourselves questions about the way we exercise our small powers as father, mother, parents, wife, husband, boss, manager. This question deserves an answer today: How good a spiritual leader are you over your family, your coworkers, your business, etc.?

In the midst of Jesus' kingdom stands the cross. As St Paul says, everything has been reconciled in him, making peace by the blood of his cross. The crowds that looked at

Jesus crucified were astonished and could not understand that he is a King who dies on the cross. But, the other criminal who was crucified with him and opened his heart to him, discovered his kingdom. He said, “Remember me when you come in your kingdom”. And Jesus replied, “I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise”.

When we give our heart to Jesus and are forgiven by Jesus, it is today, and not tomorrow, that a new road in our life is open forever. The story of this man is the story of each one of us. Whatever might be our past, even where society has condemned us, Jesus is able to forgive us when we turn to him; he gives us access to his Kingdom.

Christ is the king of life. The Gospel does not present Jesus’ passion as a failure, but as a victory of life. In the second reading, St Paul says, Jesus is the first born of all creation. In him were created all things and in him all things hold together. All those who approach Jesus in truth and in spirit receive grace over grace. Christ is king because he is the first to enter into life with his humanity and he wants to share that life with us. He is the shepherd who stands at the head of his sheep to lead them to the abundance of life in the kingdom of his Father.

Christ is the king of peace who reconciled us with his Father through the sacrifice of the cross. The cross is a crossroad where God and humanity, men and women, meet in order to build a new world based on the values of the kingdom of peace. In Jesus men and women of every race, tongue, nation and culture are gathered together and reconciled. The victory of Christ on the cross is the victory of love and reconciliation.

That victory has been materialized in the sacrifice of the Mass that Jesus left us. The Holy Mass is the celebration of the New Covenant. Jesus himself says, “I no longer call you slaves, because a slave does not know what his master is doing. I have called friends, because I told you everything I have heard from my Father” (Jn 15: 15). The Mass is the celebration of this reality which could only be accomplished by the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. The Mass and the Eucharist are memorial of Christ the King’s victory and his gift of charity to us.

At the end of this Liturgical Year, let us renew our faith in Christ the King through the Eucharist. Let us ask the Lord Jesus to revive in us the awareness of his real presence in the Eucharist. Let us ask him to help us understand that by giving us his body and his blood, he is perpetually with us until the end of time. God bless you!

## **2 Samuel 5: 1-3; Colossians 1: 12-20; Luke 23: 35-43**



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Contact: [www.mbala.org](http://www.mbala.org)  
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