

**Homily Outline for the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe -  
Cycle C**

**Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception  
November 20, 2022**

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S.S.P.: Christ the King is Our Lord and Savior, who reigns in our minds, in our wills, in our hearts, and in our bodies.

- I. Today we celebrate the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe.
  - A. The Church highlights the closing of each liturgical year by celebrating the solemnity of Christ the King: next week will be the First Sunday of Advent!
  - B. As liturgical feast days go, this one is relatively new.
    1. It was instituted by Pope Pius XI in 1925 with the publication of his encyclical *Quas Primas*.
    2. The encyclical responded to the growing nationalism and secularism taking place throughout Europe and other places in the world.
    3. People were desperate. They were attracted to emerging dictators such as Mussolini, Hitler, and Stalin.
    4. Therefore, this feast day was established to proclaim that Jesus Christ is the only sovereign king who rules over us.

## II. Where is Christ's Kingdom?

A. Jesus answered this question clearly when asked by Pontius Pilate if He were a King, saying, "My kingdom does not belong to this world" (John 18:36).

1. On the cross above Our Lord's head Pilate had ordered to be placed an inscription that read, "This is the King of the Jews."
2. This was intended to mock Jesus, but in fact proclaimed a profound truth.

B. When Pope Pius XI established this Solemnity of Christ the King, he wrote in his encyclical letter *Quas Primas* that Jesus "must reign in our minds, which should assent with perfect submission and firm belief to revealed truths and to the doctrines of Christ. He must reign in our wills, which should obey the laws and precepts of God. He must reign in our hearts, which should spurn natural desires and love God above all things, and cleave to him alone. He must reign in our bodies and in our members, which should serve as instruments for the interior sanctification of our souls" (n. 33).

1. He must reign in our minds: we must think about Christ throughout the day as we consider the moral implications of our daily activities, not just when we go to church.
2. He must reign in our wills: we must decide and intend to follow His commandments.
3. He must reign in our hearts: we must love God above all else and our neighbor as ourselves, i.e., "To love is to will the good of the other."
4. He must reign in our bodies and in every member of our body: our actions must reflect the interior disposition of our hearts.

### III. What is Christ's Kingdom like?

A. Preface for today's Mass: The Kingdom of God is an "eternal and universal kingdom, a kingdom of truth and life, a kingdom of holiness and grace, a kingdom of justice, love and peace."

B. Let's look at each of these components:

1. An eternal kingdom: it will last forever.
2. A universal kingdom: it embraces and supersedes all other kingdoms.
3. A kingdom of truth: there is no "your truth" and "my truth," but only The Truth.
4. A kingdom of life: a place where all human life is held sacred as made in the image and likeness of God.
5. A kingdom of holiness: a place for all the saints to dwell.
6. A kingdom of grace: a place to abide in God's love.
7. A kingdom of justice: a place to give God the worship that we owe to Him.
8. A kingdom of peace: a place where there is no more violence, conflict, or division.

IV. The fourth declaration of our Fourth Diocesan Synod, which concluded five years ago on the Solemnity of Christ the King in 2017, declared, "To be a disciple means to accept Jesus Christ as one's Lord and Savior. Disciples are those who make a conscious, firm decision, carried out in action, to be followers of Jesus Christ no matter the cost to themselves. Catholic discipleship refers to a committed approach to living a Christian life within the Catholic Church."

- A. "Christ the King" means that Jesus is our Lord and Savior - it's OK for Catholics to say that! In fact, we must say that!
- B. "Lord" means that He is Master of all that we have and all that we are: My body, my money, my vocation, my life - everything - belongs to God.
- C. "Savior" means that He came to save us, not Himself: cf. story in today's Gospel of the two thieves crucified with Jesus: "If you are a King, save yourself!"
- D. Jesus replied to him, "Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise" (Lk 23:35-43).
  - 1. Christ invites us to His kingdom now, not some distant time in the future.
  - 2. We do not have to wait until we die to be part of God's Kingdom.
  - 3. Christ comes to us now and at every Mass in the Eucharist, to enter our hearts, where we welcome Him to reign as our Sovereign King.

V. May God give us this grace. Amen.