

Christ King of the Universe (B)
(Daniel 7:13-14 / John 18:33-37)
24.11.2024

Dear brothers and sisters,

Today, we celebrate the solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe. In the passage of St John's gospel we have just heard, Jesus tells us that "He is a king", but He goes on to explain that "his kingdom is not a kingdom of this world".

Kings or queens of this world reign over the subjects of their respective nations.

Jesus Christ is King of the Universe: He reigns over all men and women of all nations, moreover he reigns over the whole creation. In other words, our Lord Jesus-Christ reigns over all human beings who were created through him and over the whole creation which was created through Him. We read in the Letter of St Paul to the Colossians (1:14-15): "Jesus Christ is the image of the unseen God and the first born of all creation, for in Him were created all things in heaven and on earth, everything visible and everything invisible".

Jesus Christ, king of the universe, has his own way of being king. The Cross is his throne. He reigned by remaining faithful to his vocation until the end, whatever the price involved. The vocation confided to Him by His Father was to reveal the Father's love for everyone without exception. Most of his contemporaries refused to welcome his mission, which was to announce the good news of God's love for all. As a result the Lord Jesus had to go through his passion and death on the Cross, out of love for his Father and for us. Such was the price he had to pay for his fidelity to his Father's will. The proof that this was the right way for him to follow is that his Father raised Him from the dead on the third day. He lives and reigns with his Father for ever.

This celebration of Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, obviously concerns Jesus first and foremost, but it concerns not only Jesus; this celebration also concerns each one of us, because we share in the Lord Jesus' kingship. We read in the Book of the Apocalypse (1:6 and 5:10) that "Jesus made us a line of kings and priests". We are also kings called to live our kingship as Jesus lived his own. Consequently, this celebration invites us to an examination of conscience. We must ask ourselves: Are we faithful to our vocation in life as Jesus was faithful to his? Are we faithful to the promises we have made? The promises common to all of us are our baptismal promises, which we renew each year during the Easter Vigil. Some of us have made others promises related to a particular calling in life: marriage, priesthood or consecrated life for example. Are we ready to pay the price whatever this may be in order to remain faithful to our calling in life and the promises we have made?

Christ also reigned by loving and servicing others, without lording it over them. We remember Jesus washing the feet of his disciples, all his disciples, even Judas the traitor. Are we inhabited by the desire to serve or do we prefer to be served? Are we ready to serve all those the Lord sends on our way, without preferring one or ignoring another? We know Jesus' preferential love and attention for the poor, the little ones, the migrants, the marginalized, the outcast, without forgetting all the others, the great of this world included.

To get to speak to a king or a queen of this world is not small matter. It is even quite a challenge. We need an appointment and have to follow a protocol of gestures and words before having the possibility to say what we might want to say. We have to say it quickly because the opportunity is short.

Things are different with the King of the Universe. He lives in our heart. We can speak to him when we want, as often as we want, as long as we want. He is always there present, listening, compassionate, ever ready to help, and even anxious to help. Are we aware of his presence within us? Do we honour his royal presence day after day?

If the opportunity is offered to us to speak with a king or a queen of this world, we discover that a lot reposes on appearances and externals: the pomp of the palace, dress code, having the art to be able to talk and laugh about everything and nothing. In other words, it is a high society gathering, something quite worldly.

To meet the king of the universe is another matter. It is a heart to heart encounter. He relates from his heart to our heart, from his heart full of love for us to our heart which desires to love him in return. We love Him by doing His will.

It is clear for us now that the Kingdom of Christ is not like the kingdoms of this world.

When we pray, we say “Lord, may your kingdom come”, we mean: Lord, may you be recognized as king by each one of us and by every human being! Christ the King came to bear witness to the truth. His kingdom of truth is about love and peace.

As a gift from the King of the Universe, we share in his kingship. And so, we too are called to bear witness to the truth, to love and work for peace. May we love as the Lord loved! To love is to serve our neighbour; it is to respect them and to honour the whole of creation; it is to assist others in their basic needs, and to help them to become who they are in the Lord’s eyes. May we love and, as we love, may we contribute to the coming of God’s kingdom here on earth!

May we be instruments of peace, wherever we are! In so doing, may we contribute to the coming of God’s kingdom here and now!