



Bringing Home the Word

Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe
November 25, 2018

Honoring Our King

By Mary Katharine Deeley

Like many people, when I hear the words *king* and *queen*, I have an image formed by fairy tales and historical novels. The rulers of countries live in castles. They wear crowns and long capes and sit on thrones while their loyal subjects pay them homage. While I'm aware that modern kings and queens wear regular clothes unless tradition dictates otherwise and that castles have become more contemporary, I still watch royal weddings for a glimpse of the pageantry that fed my childhood fantasies.

Sunday Readings

Daniel 7:13–14

His dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not pass away, his kingship, one that shall not be destroyed.

Revelation 1:5–8

"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."

John 18:33b–37

Jesus answered [Pilate], "You say I am a king. For this I was born and for this I came into the world."

Pilate had an idea of what kings were like, too. In the first century, kings made laws and led people into battle. They had great armies and were a danger to another country's way of life. The Jews kept talking about a Messiah who would become king and destroy Israel's enemies. Pilate wasn't taking any chances. For Rome's sake, he would get rid of anyone who seemed a threat.

What Pilate failed to realize was that Israel's king had a very specific function, and it was not to make laws or lead armies. Instead, the king was to study and obey the Law of God and become himself the example of obedience (see Deuteronomy 17:18–20). When Pilate called Jesus "the King of the Jews," his words were truer than he knew, for Jesus was obedient to his Father, even unto accepting death for our sake. But Pilate had no idea why he was right because he was thinking in human terms.

Today we honor Christ, the king of the Jews, of all of us, and of the whole universe. Let us see him as he is and do as he does. +

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A Word from Pope Francis

The Lord says: it is not important to me that you do this or that, it is important to me that the orphan is cared for, that the widow is cared for, that the outcast person is heard, that creation is protected. This is the kingdom of God!

—Homily, July 26, 2014



REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- Do we express thanks to Jesus for giving us the means to share in his kingdom?
- Do we see Christ as our king, or do we instead pay homage to material things?



Thank You, God!

By Fr. Thomas Richstatter, OFM

If I ask why you attend church, would you offer any of the following replies? “I go to pray.” “I like to hear sermons that help me know how to live.” “I go to ask God to bless my family.” “I like the music.” “I go to receive the Lord in holy Communion.”

These are all good answers, but the most *Catholic* answer is, “I go to Mass to say thank you to God.”

Eucharist comes from the Greek for “giving thanks.” And at each Eucharist, as we begin the central act of the Mass, which we call the Eucharistic Prayer—our great thanksgiving prayer—the priest invites: “Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.” And we all respond, “It is right and just.” It is the right thing to do to give God thanks and praise. And why?

Because to say “thank you” is what one does when receiving a gift. From childhood your parents taught you that whenever someone gives you something, you are to say, “Thank you.” And once you were old enough to write, they encouraged you to write a thank-you note to those who gave you gifts on your birthday or at Christmas. “Thank you” is the proper, human response to a gift. It indicates gratitude and appreciation for something freely given, something we did not merit or earn.

What a Gift!

Catholics celebrate the Eucharist because

we know we’ve been given a gift. Our very existence is a gift; God didn’t have to create us. And not only do we exist. We live redeemed—saved from sin by the death of Jesus on the cross and destined for eternal happiness. It that isn’t a gift, I don’t know what is!

Each time we celebrate the Eucharist we gather with other grateful Catholics and listen as the Scriptures are proclaimed. We hear repeatedly of God’s gifts: creation, freedom, salvation, healing, redemption, and everlasting life. Filled with gratitude for so great a gift, we in turn want to give a gift to God. We bring forward bread and wine, our food and drink, the symbols of our lives, and place them on the altar, God’s banquet table. And we say, “Thank you, God!” in our Eucharistic Prayer. And in the course of that prayer we remember how—at that first Eucharist—Jesus himself took bread and wine and *gave God thanks*.

Then something wonderful happens. God changes our gifts and gives them back to us as a gift more wonderful than we ever could have imagined: the very Body and Blood of Christ. And we joyfully process to the altar a second time—this time not to *give* a gift of bread and wine, but to *receive* a divine, transforming gift.

Creating a New World

The same Holy Spirit whose power changed the bread and wine now changes us. “We, though many, are one body, for

we all partake of the one loaf” (1 Corinthians 10:17).

We Catholics believe that at the Eucharist we really receive the Body of Christ. This belief is central to our Catholic identity. But if we believe that we really receive Christ’s Body and that we really become Christ’s Body, then we have to act accordingly.

At the conclusion of each Eucharist we are sent forth, commissioned to go into the world and bring Christ’s Spirit to everyone we meet and everything we do. We become ambassadors of encouragement, compassion, generosity, healing, understanding, forgiveness, and reconciliation. The gift of the Eucharist is the insight that, in living for others, we find life’s true meaning. Thank you, God! +



PRAYER

Lord, I am grateful that you are the way, the truth, and the life. Help me to be faithful to the truth of the gospel.

From *Grateful Meditations for Every Day in Ordinary Time*, Rev. Warren J. Savage and Mary Ann McSweeney

WEEKDAY READINGS

November 26-
December 1

Monday *Weekday:* Rv 14:1–3, 4b–5 / Lk 21:1–4

Tuesday *Weekday:* Rv 14:14–19 / Lk 21:5–11

Wednesday *Weekday:* Rv 15:1–4 / Lk 21:12–19

Thursday *Weekday:* Rv 18:1–2, 21–23; 19:1–3, 9a / Lk 21:20–28

Friday *St. Andrew:*
Rom 10:9–18 / Mt 4:18–22

Saturday *Weekday:*
Rv 22:1–7 / Lk 21:34–36