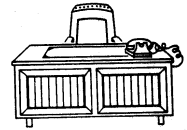


Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe

November 24, 2019



From the Desk of
Fr. Romanus

Dear Parishioners,

The Solemnity of Christ the King:

This Sunday is the Solemnity of Christ the King, a celebration of Jesus' messianic leadership. The celebration is a great way to end the liturgical year and welcome a new liturgical season that begins with the first Sunday of Advent. Pope Pius XI instituted this Solemnity in 1925, in an encyclical entitled *Quas Primas*. In the encyclical, the Pope attributed the denial of the Kingship of Christ to the rise of secularism.

The rise of dictatorship in Europe influenced the institution of the solemnity, coupled with numerous challenges to the Church's power and influence. Originally, the Church celebrated this feast on the last Sunday in October, but later moved it to the last Sunday of Ordinary Time in the revised liturgical calendar of 1969.

Many people in our society see kingship as archaic, undemocratic and suspect due to the ever-present danger of tyranny. The absence of the kind of checks and balances inherent in a democratic system makes the concept of kingship uncomfortable. When power is concentrated on one individual, there is the danger of dictatorship. Those concerned about the dangers of human kingship should realize that the reign of God is different.

Unlike human royalty, spiced with honor, prestige, extravagance and pomposity, the kingship of Christ is rooted in simplicity and humility. It is ironic that Jesus was crowned king by the very people who rejected him as king (Matthew 27:29). In the prelude to his crucifixion, Jesus received a crown not made of gold, diamond and ruby, but of thorns. Likewise, a staff not made of precious metals and stones, but of reed. As king, Jesus is the champion of our fight against evil, and the model of Christian leadership. His earthly reign is the reign of love, justice and peace. The fullness of his reign lies beyond human experience as portrayed in Scripture passages, especially the apocalyptic writings.

Thanksgiving:

This Thursday is the annual celebration of Thanksgiving in the United States. Its origin has been a subject of boosterism with often-conflicting claims. Part of the confusion is the mixing of Thanksgiving as a secular holiday with Thanksgiving as a religious service. Majority opinion traces Thanksgiving to the Puritan practice of giving thanks for a good harvest. Thanksgiving was not celebrated by all thirteen colonies did on the same day until 1777.

George Washington was the first president to declare Thanksgiving Day a national holiday in 1789. Abraham Lincoln, in a quest to unite the colonies declared in 1863 that the last Thursday in November be a day of Thanksgiving. Franklin D. Roosevelt, in an effort to extend the Christmas shopping season, changed it in 1939 to the third Thursday in November. This became controversial, but through the timely intervention of Congress in 1941, it was moved back to the fourth Thursday in November where it has remained.

Thanksgiving gives us a special opportunity to express gratitude to God for his many blessings. We thank God for the gift of life, health, family, friends, and resources. In any society where hard work is appreciated and rewarded, there is the tendency for one to take credit for one's accomplishments. The fact remains that God is the force behind our accomplishments. We express our spirit of gratitude in the sharing of our blessings with the less fortunate. For this reason, our parish Thanksgiving Mass collection will go to the St. Vincent de Paul society to support their on-going outreach to the poor and less privileged.

Wishing you a Happy Thanksgiving!

Fr. Romanus