

# Wellspring

## Fransalian Center for Spirituality

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November 20, 2022

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Today, we celebrate the feast of Jesus Christ, the King of the Universe. We proclaim Christ as our king and celebrate his kingship over us, rejoice in our royal and noble character and pledge our loyalty to Christ our king and master and Lord. The proclamation of the Kingdom of God and the reign of God, was the vision and mission of Jesus. It is the vision and mission of the Church today and ours too.

The first reading of today's mass (2 Samuel 5:1-3) introduces the image of the king as shepherd of God's people. The image of shepherd was important to Israel throughout the history of Salvation. Many of the leaders beginning with Abraham were shepherds. Shepherding provided ancient nomadic tribes with their staple food as well as material needed for clothing and shelter. Sheep were highly respected and valued, for without them, communal survival would have been impossible.

When the nomadic tribes evolved into monarchies, the cherished image of the shepherd was appropriated as a model for the good ruler. When the ancient author featured David as a Shepherd-King, he was portraying David as an ideal leader who tended, protected and provided generously for those under his care as a shepherd cared for the sheep.

David became king over all Israel and entered into a covenant with the people. The elders anointed him king. Despite his weaknesses, God had used him to unite the disparate twelve tribes into one powerful kingdom. Today's first reading (2 Samuel 5:1-3) tells us that David continued to grow strong and powerful, and he found favor with God as shepherd of his people. The Israelites claimed David as one like them, "Here we are your bone and your flesh," they said.

The second reading of our mass today (Colossians 1:12-20) is an inspiring hymn that sings the primacy of Christ and his unique role in God's plan of salvation. This hymn identifies Christ as the visible image of the invisible God and the first born of all creation (1:15). Christ is identified and celebrated as the head of the Church (1:17) and the firstborn from the dead (1:18) by whose blood, shed on the cross, God has made peace and has reconciled all things in him.

The Gospel reading of today's mass (Luke 23:35-43) tells us about Jesus being insulted and mocked as king of the Jews. We honor him today as our king. It is through humiliation, mockery, insult, etc. that Jesus became our king. This excerpt also speaks of the inscription on the cross that identifies Jesus as the King of the Jews. It also speaks of one of the criminals hanging by the side of the cross of Jesus pleading, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom" (Luke 23:42).

This is the irony, the real paradox...humiliation and triumph are brought together in one and the same act...greatness has come through humiliation. Jesus is crowned king, but he is crowned with thorns instead of gold and he reigns from the cross instead of a throne and he is surrounded by criminals instead of noble ministers. What Jesus taught his disciples came true in his own experience, "he who humbles himself will be exalted"

Kings and queens, who are not just figureheads, exert power over their subjects. Kingdom is where the King's "will" happens. It is not the will of the majority or minority but the will of the king. Kingdom of God is where God's "will" happens – God reigns, God rules - God governs! The reign of God should be understood as the governance of God. Kingdom of God is where the heart of God - the heart of love reigns. The reign of God is the liberating lordship of Christ through the cross, through humbling service, through death...through the servant king.

Jesus, our king, is showing us another kind of power from the cross. In accepting the cross Jesus entered into solidarity with us, sinful and weak human beings. While kings and other rulers of the world, even religious authorities, exercise power over us, Jesus bends his knees to wash our feet and takes up the cross and lays down his life for us and calls us to do the same.

The first reading of today's mass tells us that the Israelites claimed David as one like them, "Here we are your bone and your flesh," (2 Samuel 5:1-3). Jesus, the king of the universe, became one with us, "our bone and our flesh." He says, "I no longer speak of you as slaves, for a slave does not know what his master is about. Instead, I call you friends..." (John 15:15). His reign calls us to live as brothers and sisters in his kingdom, not as slaves under control. Being under his reign, we live in solidarity with all people as brothers and sisters in Jesus.

As we come to the end of this liturgical season and celebrate the kingship of Jesus over us, I want to encourage you to take a few moments to be still and reflect on how your day has been and on how you have desired and tried to do what God wants of you as you went about doing your daily chores and fulfilling your responsibilities. Let us also take a few moments each day of this week and pray...

May your kingdom come! May your will be done! May your purpose be fulfilled! May I hunger and thirst for your will for me and may I bring my will into harmony with your will, O Lord!

God bless you and your family.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

# **Our Lord Jesus Christ, King Of The Universe**

**November 20, 2022**

**Consult not your fears but your hopes and your dreams.  
Think not about your frustrations, but about your unfulfilled potential.  
Concern yourself not with what you tried and failed in,  
but with what it is still possible for you to do.**

**(Pope John XXIII)**

## **Collect**

Almighty ever-living God,  
whose will is to restore all things  
in your beloved Son, the King of the universe,  
grant, we pray, that the whole creation,  
set free from slavery,  
may render your majesty service  
and ceaselessly proclaim your praise.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

## **Liturgy of the Word**

Prayerfully read the first reading and then read my reflections below and spend a few moments of personal reflection. Do the same with Responsorial Psalm and other readings.

### **2 Samuel 5:1-3**

David became king over all Israel and entered into a covenant with the people. The elders anointed him king. Then David and his men went to capture Jerusalem. This excerpt tells us that David continued to grow strong and powerful, and he found favor with God. The Israelites claimed David as one like themselves: "Here we are your bone and your flesh."

**Today, we remember Jesus, our king, who became like us, "bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh", knowing us fully just as we are, and we take time today to celebrate his kingship over us.**

### **Psalm 122**

The psalm begins: "I was glad when they said....". Here we have a group of people who fit the saying of

Jesus, “where two to three are gathered....”. They came to a common decision, “Let us go to the house of the Lord...”. Now they have arrived. They look around with excitement, “our feet are actually standing within your gates...”. Their whole lives have found a new meaning and purpose as they join the festal procession that precede the sacrifice, following behind the priests and Levites, as they shout and dance “before the Lord” on the way up to the Altar of Sacrifice. Their faith was not just a “thing” or just a “doctrine”. They expressed it in movement, in action, in song, in dance, in poetry - they clothed the “spiritual” with garments of joy which they could share as a community.

**I rejoiced when they said to me,  
“We will go up to the house of the Lord”  
And now we have set foot,  
within your gates O Jerusalem.**

### **Colossians 1:12-20**

This is a beautiful hymn expressing the primacy of Jesus over all that has been and is and will be. All things are reconciled and brought together in Christ.....Peace and Harmony have come in and through Christ.

**Be a reconciler! Be a peacemaker!**

### **Luke 23:35-43**

This excerpt tells us about Jesus being insulted and mocked as king of the Jews. We honor him today as our king. It is through humiliation, mockery, insult, etc. that Jesus became our king. This is the irony...this is the paradox.... humiliation and triumph are brought together in one and the same act...greatness has come through humiliation. What Jesus taught his disciples came true in his own experience, “he who humbles himself will be exalted”

**Be humble! Cultivate Humility! Let humility be the quality of your person. Let it become your virtue! Humility is a dynamic virtue of positive trust in God and God’s ways; it is reverence for God and for others; it is bringing our will into harmony with God’s will; it is surrender to God and God’s ways.**

Today, we proclaim Christ as our king and celebrate his kingship over us, rejoice in our royal and noble character and pledge our loyalty to Christ our king and master and Lord. The proclamation of the Kingdom of God, the reign of God, is the vision and mission of Jesus. It is the vision and mission of the Church today and ours too.

Kingdom is where the Father’s “will”, the Father’s “heart” happens - where “Agape” reigns. Agape is the love that leads to perfection. It is this unending, unconquerable, invincible love, which leads us to “perfection”. This is the kind of love that makes us “sons of God”, godlike persons, perfect sons of the Father.

Kingdom is where the Father's Heart, the heart of love reigns. The reign of God should be understood as the Governance of God. The reign of God is the liberating lordship of Christ through the cross, through humbling service, through death...through the servant and shepherd king.

The reign of God is experienced in the gift conferred on liberated people - the freedom of the "sons of God" (children of God).

The reign of God is the fulfillment of God's plan and purpose for his creation, the universal liberation of the sons of God by the Son of God.

**Take a moment and pray: May your kingdom come! May your will be done! May your purpose be fulfilled!**

**May I bring my will into harmony with your will, O Lord!**

**Saint of the day, November 20 - Saint Edmund Rich and 62 other saints are remembered this day.**

Edmund Rich was born in Abingdon, England on November 30, 1180. He studied at Oxford, England, and in Paris, France. He taught art and mathematics at Oxford and was ordained a priest. He spent eight years teaching theology and became a Canon and treasurer of Salisbury Cathedral. An eloquent speaker, Edmund preached a crusade for Pope Gregory IX and was named archbishop of Canterbury. He became an advisor to King Henry III and presided in 1237 at Henry's ratification of the Great Charter.

When Cardinal Olt became a papal legate with the patronage of King Henry, Edmund protested. A long-lasting feud between Edmund, the king, and his legate led him to resigning his see in 1240. He went to Pontigny, France, where he became a Cistercian monk. He died at Soissons, on November 16, 1240 in Soisy-Bouy, France and was canonized in 1246 or 1247.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

**Start by doing what's necessary, then do what's possible  
and suddenly you are doing the impossible.  
(St. Francis of Assisi)**

