

Christ the King Sunday November 21, 2021

Our Lady of Perpetual Help

First Reading: Ps 93:1, 1-2, 5

¹³ I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. ¹⁴ And to him was given dominion and glory and kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.

were of this world, my servants would fight, that I might not be handed over to the Jews; but my kingship is not from the world.” ³⁷ Pilate said to him, “So you are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Every one who is of the truth hears my voice.”

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 16:5, 8, 9-10, 11

R. (1a) The LORD is king; he is robed in majesty.

The LORD is king, in splendor robed; robed is the LORD and girt about with strength.

R. The LORD is king; he is robed in majesty.

And he has made the world firm, not to be moved. Your throne stands firm from of old; from everlasting you are, O LORD.

R. The LORD is king; he is robed in majesty.

Your decrees are worthy of trust indeed; holiness befits your house, O LORD, for length of days.

R. The LORD is king; he is robed in majesty.

Second Reading: Revelation 1:5-8

⁵ ... from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the first-born of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood ⁶ and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. ⁷ Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, every one who pierced him; and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen. ⁸ “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

Gospel: John 18:33-37

³³ Pilate entered the praetorium again and called Jesus, and said to him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” ³⁴ Jesus answered, “Do you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you about me?” ³⁵ Pilate answered, “Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me; what have you done?” ³⁶ Jesus answered, “My kingship is not of this world; if my kingship

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INVITATION TO PRAY

Pause for a few moments of silence and enter more deeply into the presence of God...

Proclaim the Scriptures out loud

As you listen to the scriptures be attentive to a word, a phrase, a question, an image, or a feeling that emerges. Reflect on this quietly or share it aloud.

INVITATION TO REFLECT

History is undaunting. It just continues to its natural conclusion with or without our agreement. We have the privilege to contribute to and influence it, but not to alter its grand design. Because history can rightly be called his-story. The natural conclusion of history becomes in reality a supernatural outcome. His-story is one in which God determined to create and claim through love, a people of his own (1 Peter 2:9). Though Adam and Eve chose to disobey God and thus affected history, God in his love would not allow them to alter his-story's purpose. This week's Scripture readings portray three aspects of his - story: the promise, the prescription, and the preview. **The promise:** Imagine, some 100-200 years before Jesus was born, Daniel predicted the promise of eternal resurrection and eternal punishment. This week's first reading says, "those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." During Jesus' time walking on earth, and from before Daniel's time to the present, people have wondered and debated about the end of life, resurrection, and damnation. Many base their view of eternity on their own limited understanding. We who follow Christ base our views on the divine revelation of sacred Scripture, which holds unlimited promises. This passage in Daniel is a promise worth clinging to, for those who believe. **The prescription:** Many contemplate the end times with distress and fear. The real possibility of a life spent in "shame and everlasting contempt" looms evermore as a real possibility when they reflect on their life lived outside the will of God. Though the terror is real it is not of itself sufficient to either bring about change or remove the fearful debt they owe. Only God's powerful prescription can do that. Jesus, as Christ, became and becomes our high priest entering into God's presence offering his own life, death, and resurrection as the Sacrifice which can remove every stain of sin, making perfect and freeing from guilt and judgment those who believe. **The preview:** Jesus gives us a glimpse of his glorious and triumphant return. It does not matter that at times in history it appears that the forces of evil will overwhelm his people, the drama is not yet over until he returns and wraps up his-story. This week's Gospel passage gives us just a hint of the final outcome. Jesus and his people will be in the "win" column, while his opponents will experience the ultimate "loss." His will be a glorious victory and a triumphant return. The joy and jubilation his people feel will far surpass that which people experience when tearing down the goal post or cutting down the net over the biggest upset of the season. Ours will be the upset of eternity—the inevitable and sure conclusion to his-story. "God reconciling the world to himself is also God reconciling himself to the world. In working out the plan of redemption, the Bible does not say that man became God, but that God became man. Further, he reconciled himself to the world by 'not counting their trespasses against them.' He forgave us not by ignoring our trespasses but by assuming our trespasses. 'For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.' God became what by right he was not, so that we might become what by right we are not. This is what Christians through the ages have called 'the happy exchange.' This exchange, this reversal, is at the very epicenter of the story of our redemption," * **Persuaded!** So, persuaded that these things are true we can with the Psalmist rejoice and say, "I keep the LORD always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore, my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices; my body also dwells secure. For thou dost not give me up to Sheol or let thy godly one see the Pit. Thou dost show me the path of life; in thy presence there is fullness of joy, in thy right hand are pleasures for evermore." This is the blessed assurance of which we sing.

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INVITATION TO GROUP SHARING

First Reading

1. What does “dominion, glory, and kingship” mean to you?

Second Reading

2. What are the responsibilities of the subjects of Christ’s kingdom?

Gospel Reading

3. If you were Jesus’ spokesman, how would you answer Pilate’s question, “What have you done?”
4. How would you describe the inhabitants of his Kingdom?
5. Where and how have you experienced the call to live as a member of his Kingdom?
6. If someone asked you, “Why should I volunteer to be a member of Christ’s Kingdom?” how would you respond?

INVITATION TO ACT

Determine a specific action (individual or group) that flows from your sharing. When choosing an individual action, determine what you will do and share it with the group. When choosing a group action, determine who will take responsibility for different aspects of the action. These should be your primary considerations.

CLOSING INVITATION TO PRAY

Give thanks to God (aloud or silently) for new insights, for desires awakened, for directions clarified, for the gift of one another’s openness and sensitivity. Conclude with a final prayer.