

The Bells of St. Mary's The Church of the Immaculate Conception

Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe November 24, 2019

From Fr. Anthony Columba Ekanem, MSP—Pastor

Christmas is still a month away. How do you feel about the celebration of Christmas coming up soon? How prepared are you for Christmas after Thanksgiving Day?

For some of us, it is a simple thing to look at our lives and the world around us and find numerous things to be thankful for and celebrate. And for others, the Christmas Songs already being played in the Mall can trigger some feelings of loneliness, home-sickness, and sense of depression in our minds. Let us take a look at the history of this celebration of the Solemnity of Christ the King. The celebration of Christ as King of the Universe can help us redirect our focus on proper preparation for the coming of Christ into our lives and our world. For instance, during this period of this Impeachment Enquiry, like any other political situation, can you ask yourself this simple question, where do I place your loyalty? This stand is more than being patriotic. That is why the end of this Liturgical Year today is befitting to honor Our Lord Jesus Christ as a King.

The Solemnity of our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, is celebrated today in the Catholic Church to honor Jesus Christ as Lord, and judge over all creation. This Solemnity of Christ is a 'newer' feast in the Catholic Church. Pope Pius XI established it in 1926. However, the reality of Christ as King is not new at all. Jesus is referred to as King throughout the New Testament. This title does not apply to the status of an earthly king. Like many of the Jews had been expecting. Some expected the overthrowing of the Roman rule and be an earthly king. Instead, Jesus is the King of all creation, in this world, and also for eternity.

Pope XI witnessed a turbulent time in the world's history. Secularism, a way of life that leaves God out of people's thinking and living and organizes their lives as if God did not exist, was on the rise. The Pope established this feast as a statement of faith against the prevailing ideologies of communism and secularism. The two ways of thinking attempted to exclude faith, religion, and God from humanity. The feast is even more relevant to us now-a-day that we are facing many anti-Christian and anti-Catholic ideologies such as secularism, nationalism, materialism, relativism, anti-clericalism, and persecution of Christians. Pope Pius XI understood that the old royal kingdom of the world was crumbling, and the apparent dangers were presenting themselves. And so, the Pope wanted to challenge these new emerging allegiances. He wanted to remind people that ultimate loyalty was due to our God in Heaven.

Dangerous dictatorships were emerging in Europe and beyond. Christ is King, Pope Pius, and the Christian faithful saw the rest and reverence for Christ's authority waning during the unrest during the first part of the 20th century. In response, the feast was set with the intent to reaffirm and refocus our faith and respect in the Kingship of Jesus over individuals, families, society, government, and nations. The title of the celebration was "Jesu Christi Regis" – Our Lord Jesus Christ, the King. However, in 1969, Pope Paul VI gave the feast a new title: "Jesu Christi Universum Regis – Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the universe. He elevated it to a Solemnity, fixed its celebration on the last Sunday of each liturgical year.

Referring to happiness, Pope Pius XI pointed out in his Encyclical Quas Primas, and in which he established the feast of Christ the King, that our Lord is the author of happiness. He wrote, "Oh, what happiness would be Ours if all men, individuals, families, and nations, would let Christ govern themselves!" Some problems the world faced today differ from the particular event that inspired Pope Pius XI to establish this feast in 1925. His message and call to honor Christ the King in a society that denies the authority our Lord is no less pertinent now than it was then. Today, individualism has been embraced to such an extreme, that for many, the only authority is the individual self. Relativism has crept into our society, with individuals defining their truths.

By celebrating this feast, we are upholding: the teachings of the Scripture, the teachings of the Church, and continue to proclaim Jesus as our leader, judge, and King. The motif of Christ's eternal dominion over the universe makes the Solemnity a fitting end to the liturgical year. The feast is observed in Lutheran, Anglican, and other Churches since most Christians understand the celebration as an amplification of the Ascension when Jesus entered Heaven to assume His majestic glory on the Throne of the Lamb at the right hand of the Father.

To help us understand the more practical way we can live loyally and celebrate this day properly, take a look at how David, a handsome and daring and daring young, became a king of a united country by unanimous acclamation because of his servant – shepherd spirit. He was anointed three times, first by the prophet Samuel at the command. Later, the people of Judah. In today's reading, 2 Sam 5:1 -3, David was anointed a third time, this time as King over all the tribes of Israel. This anointing three times marked him as King by both the choice of God and of the people. His kingship prefigures the universal sovereignty of Christ.

In our Second Reading (Colossians 1:12 -20), Christ is not only head of the Church but the Lord of creation. St Paul states this in the reading that we are members of His kingdom, and in Him, we have redemption and forgiveness of sins. For this reason, 1 Peter 2:9 calls us, "kingly people." For this reason, again, St Paul challenges us. "This saying is trustworthy: 'If we have died with Him, we shall live with Him, if we persevere, we shall reign with Him'" (2 Timothy 2:11)

To examine the biblical evidence of the kingship and kingdom of Jesus, with the theological basis for calling Christ King, can help us grow spiritually, expand our relationship with Jesus as Lord of our lives, especially in our interaction with His creation and fellow creatures. The image of shepherds in the Bible is known to be responsible for watching over their flocks, protect them from predators, and tend to the overall well – being. In the Gospel today, Luke 23:35-43, Christ reigned from the cross and brought salvation to one of the thieves crucified with Him. The irony of that whole scene is when the rulers sneered at Him and said, "He saved others, let Him save Himself if He is the chosen one, the Christ of God." (verse 35) While the soldiers jeered at Him, saying, "If you are King of the Jews, save yourself." But the profound truth came when Jesus responded to the repentant thief on the cross, "Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise." (Verse 43) Practicing the sacramental life of the Church like that of Reconciliation and Eucharistic participation can lead us along because Jesus is that gracious dispenser of mercy even on the cross before the rulers and soldiers of this world.

Some of the questions to ponder upon:

- Is Jesus Christ, your Lord, and Savior?
- What ways can you express your loyalty to Him?
- How do the images of Christ the King today challenge or affirm you?
- Which of these offers you a new way of being obedient to Christ the King?

Stewardship

*Tithing - God's Plan for Giving on Sunday, 11/17/19 our Offering was \$ 3,009.00

*Today's second collection is for Organ Renovation. Thank you for your generosity.

Last week second collection for Catholic Charity we collected \$918.00 Thank you for your generosity.

Parish Family Directory:

Please see Dianne to make your appointment for your parish

Family photo for December 21 & 22 and January 4 & 5. This family photo is only for the use of the parish.

NEED FOR A NEW BOILER

We are in need of a new Boiler for the Rectory. The one we have now is having some problems and it has been serving for about 22 years or more. ATLAS WELDING & BOILER REPAIR COMPANY who maintains the Heating—system for us, are proposing we get a new one because the parts are now difficult to find or fix and are obsolete. A new one will cost about \$31,350 including labor.

Sundays Readings:

First Reading: 2 Samuel 5: 1-3 p. 63

Because David was so loved as a leader, the elders of all the tribes anointed him king of Israel at Hebron. King David shepherded the people from then on.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 122:1-2, 3-4, 4-5, p. 63 Let us go rejoicing to the house of the Lord.

Second Reading: Colossians 1: 12-20 p. 64 God's Son brought the people into the reign of forgiveness and love. He heads the body, the church, and has primacy in all things, making peace through the blood of his cross.

Gospel: Luke 23: 35-43 p. 65 The soldiers made fun of Jesus on the cross, offered him bitter wine, told him to save himself if he was the Christ, and told him to put an inscription over his head: "This is the King of the Jews."

Religious Education

November:

11/30/19 No Religious Education Classes — Happy Thanksgiving to all our families of St. Mary's Church

Prayer for Vocations

Hail Mary, full of grace; all generations' call you blessed.

Hail Mother of God; when asked by the angel to bear the Son of the Most High, filled with faith, you responded: "Let it be done unto me."

Holy Mother of Jesus, at the wedding feast at Cana, you prompted your Son to perform his first sign.

Be with us as we discern our life's work and guide us in the way we are called to follow in the footsteps of your Son.

Holy Mother of the Savior, at the foot of the cross you mourned the death of your only Son.

Bless and embrace the loving parents of all priests, deacons, brothers and sisters.

Holy Mother of the Good Shepherd, turn your motherly care to this nation.

Intercede for us to the Lord of the harvest to send more laborers to the harvest in this land dedicated to your honor.

Queen of Peace, Mirror of Justice, Health of the Sick, inspire vocations in our time.

Let the word of your Son be made flesh anew in the lives of persons anxious to proclaim the good news of everlasting life. Amen.

- To our parishioners please do not light up candles that are not bought from the parish. We sell the appropriate candle for the safety of the Church. Candles that are not ours will be taken out of the church.
- We will be preparing for the Feast of The Immaculate Conception Mass on Saturday December 7, 2019 at 6:00pm. We are asking parishioners to bring a tray of their typical culture dish or pastry, soda, water etc. We will have a signing sheet in the back of the church and in the rectory for parishioners to sign up. If you do not wish to bring a dish and will like to donate please come to the rectory.

**Mass Intentions for the week of
November 23 - December 1, 2019**

Saturday, November 23, 2019:

12:05 pm - Virgil Borrelli + * Angelina Borrelli

5:00 pm - Joanne Kunny + * Rose Anne Jones

7:30 pm - Mia Medina + * Ana Medina

Sunday, November 24, 2019:

7:30 am - For the Parishioners/ Para Los Parroquianos

9:00 am - Ruben Sanchez *Anahi Sanchez

11:00 am - Coltilde & Manuel Rodrigues * Eduardo & Esther Rodrigues

Monday, November 25, 2019:

8:15am - Available/Disponibile

12:05 pm - Patricia Zamborsky * William Zamborsky

Tuesday November 26, 2019

8:15am - Available/Disponibile

12:05pm - Benny Mathew + * Lilla DelRio

Wednesday, November 27, 2019

8:15am - Available/Disponibile

12:05 pm - Rosaleen Fitzpatrick (Living) * Carmel Mangan

Thursday, November 28, 2019:

10:00 am - Mass of Thanksgiving TRILINGUAL

Friday, November 29, 2019:

8:15 am - Donahue Family + *Laurence Donohue

12:05 pm - Amparo Chicano + * Violet Chicano

Saturday, November 30, 2019:

12:05 pm - Efrin C. Sr. Teresita M. Lindo + * Rachel Mital & Family

5:00 pm - Rose Kunny * Tara Pratt Damian Esposito

7:30 pm - Nancy Magdalena Carrasco Borja + * Elvis Delgado

Sunday, December 1, 2019:

7:30 am - For the Parishioners/ Para Los Parroquianos

9:00 am - Guadalupe Reyes+ * La Familia

11:00 am - Dennis M. McMahan * The Bonanno Family

+Indicates deceased *Indicates the person (s) who requested the Mass.