

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON How worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and divinity, and wisdom and strength and honour. To him belong glory and power for ever and ever.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Ps 22)

ANTIPHON: The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

RESPONSE: The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

LECTOR: The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want. Fresh and green are the pastures where he gives me repose. **R.**

LECTOR: Near restful waters he leads me, to revive my drooping spirit. He guides me along the right path; he is true to his name. **R.**

LECTOR: You have prepared a banquet for me in the sight of my foes. My head you have anointed with oil; my cup is overflowing. **R.**

LECTOR: Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me all the days of my life. In the Lord's own house shall I dwell for ever and ever. **R.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Alleluia, alleluia! Blessings on him who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessings on the coming kingdom of our father David! Alleluia!

COMMUNION ANTIPHON (or a hymn) The Lord sits as King for ever. The Lord will bless his people with peace.

TODAY'S READINGS Ezekiel 34:11-12, 15-17; 1 Corinthians 15:20-26, 28; Matthew 25:31-46

NEXT WEEK (1st Sunday Advent, Year B) Is 63:16-17, 64:1, 3-8; Ps 79; 1 Cor 1:3-9; Mk 13:33-37

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A kingship of love



22 November 2020 Christ the King Year A

Today we bring the liturgical year to conclusion with the Feast of Christ the King. We celebrate that Christ is Lord and King, ruler of all creation, and Lord of our lives. In the gospel we learn about the nature of his kingship, and what is expected of us as his people.

In some countries where they still have royal families, the people will say that royalty needs to reinvent itself in order to remain relevant; to be closer to the people; to be in touch with the burning issues of the country.

But in Jesus we have a king who understood the needs of the people of his time and especially understood and cared for the problems and sufferings of those whom society shunned and cast away. He devoted his life to teaching people about God's mercy and steadfast love. He walked, lived and ate amongst the people. He embraced the people. He did not lord it over them. No one was ever turned away. Everyone was welcome to come to him.

Through his words and actions, his parables and his miracles, he showed that God is not distant from us but very much part of our lives, aware of our everyday worries, our sufferings, our problems, our fears. Jesus gave hope, light and life to all who would listen to him, but especially those who were outcast or on the fringes of society.

Today, humanity continues to face many burning issues, natural disasters and serious problems. 2020 has been a particularly difficult year. In some parts of the world, these problems consume the lives of entire families, towns and even cities. Some will ask, "Where is God in this?" Just as those issues burn in the hearts and lives of the people, those issues burn in the heart and the life of God. But fear not. God does not desert us. God continues to provide hope, light and life.

This is the nature of the kingdom of Christ the King. His kingship is a kingship of love, compassion and mercy. And in this kingdom, we will be judged according to our works of love, compassion and mercy, by what we do for one another: "I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you made me welcome; I was naked and you clothed me, sick and you visited me, in prison and you came to see me."

For, Jesus insists, when you did it to one of the least of my people, you did it to me! And, similarly, if you neglected to do this, you neglected to do it to me! And it is the poor and the needy who should have our special care, our preferential option.