

# HOMILY ~ CHRIST THE KING

## NOVEMBER 23/24, 2024

Today we celebrate the feast of Christ the King. We do not have royalty in this country, and the royalty that exists in other countries is much different than the royalty that existed 2000 years ago in the Middle East. Kingship at that time was all about fame, fortune and power. That is what the people at that time were looking for in a Messiah. They expected the Messiah to establish his kingship through military force. That is the way it was done at that time. At that time, you did not get to pick your king. At that time, citizenship was established by where you lived; and that determined the king that you would follow.

Jesus tells us in the Gospel Reading that his kingdom does not belong to this world. The kingship of Jesus is much different from the kingship at the time; and citizenship in Christ's kingdom is not determined by where we live, but rather by how we live. As we hear in the Gospel Reading, they did not quite know what to make of Jesus because he was not the type of king that they expected. I found this quote from an African American preacher, S.M. Lockridge, "*The Pharisees couldn't stand him. But they found they couldn't stop him. Pilot couldn't find fault in him. Herod couldn't kill him. Death couldn't handle him, and the grave couldn't hold him. Yea! That's my King.*" That is the King I want to follow.

While we do not have royalty in this country, we still are fascinated by those who have fame, fortune and power. That is evidenced by the great variety of reality TV shows that have been on the air in recent years. We are fascinated by celebrities. They have fame, fortune and power; but I do not think any of us really want to be like them. We do not have many worthy celebrity role models in our country today, people that we would like to have our children follow. It seems like as soon as we find someone that may be a good role model; we find out something negative about them that we would rather not know. No one is perfect. On some level, we would still like to have fame, fortune and power.

Do we really want that? When you think about it, it must be really awful to be famous. You cannot make a move in public without someone recognizing you. You could become a prisoner in your own home. The paparazzi are always trying to invade your privacy and take pictures of you, hoping to get something unflattering. Someone would be posting every mistake you make. Who would want that? Sometimes we dream about being rich, winning the lottery. Millions of dollars are spent on lottery tickets every year. We even talk about what we would do with the money if we won. Would you really want all of that money? It would take a lot of energy just to take care of it. You would not know if people really wanted to be friends with you or if they were just after your wealth. I think I just want enough, and I think anything beyond that the money would be a burden. Do you really want to be in a position where you had power, authority and control over people? I do not think I would want that responsibility.

Jesus came to the earth in a human body 2000 years ago to show us how to live. He was not demonstrating a life of fame, fortune and power. I do want him to be my King. He is the one role model that I can always follow, that I would like our children to follow. I want citizenship in Christ's kingdom; and that is determined not by where we live, but by who we follow. As Jesus tells us in the Gospel Reading today, his kingdom is not of this world; I think we need to give up the fame, fortune and power that this world values. A number of years ago we had the WWJD bracelets, and I think it became trivialized over time. However, I find myself asking that question more and more in recent months. I usually can figure out what Jesus would do; and ultimately, this is what I want do.

And that is what I do.

Love and Peace,

Fr. Jim