

Homily: 34<sup>th</sup> Sunday Cycle A: Christ the King: 2023; Ez 34: 11-12; Ps. 23; 1 Corth 15:  
20-26, 28; Mt. 35: 31-36

*“Is Jesus Christ truly the King of our Life?”*

1. **Jesus Christ is the King of the universe and wants to be the King of each individual human being on earth.** Hopefully all of us would acknowledge that fact intellectually, but do we practically invite the Lord Jesus to become part of each aspect of our life and to rule and guide our mind, heart, and will - so that we can become the holy people He calls us to be?! He won't force us to accept Him as King as He respects our free will, but He wants to be part of our ENTIRE life because He loves us so much! *When you love someone immensely you want to be involved in every part of their life, big and small. This is the key to holiness:* inviting God to be involved in everything in life, no matter how big or how small. This is the secret of the saints. *Are we getting ready to take a test at school, do we have a big presentation to make at work, are we going to the grocery store, are we pondering marriage with a certain person, do I feel attracted to the priesthood, should we have another child, am I tempted to sin with this person, should I do some work around the house, do I need to break off a friendship that is leading me astray, should I get involved in some sort of charitable work, do I need to make more time for prayer each day, do I need to spend more time with my family, etc. etc?* God wants to be involved in every aspect of our life. Everything we do should be a living prayer of praise to the Lord because we do all in union with Him. Why making a morning offering is so important.
2. **We will only strive to have Jesus be the King of our life, if we have allowed the gift of His love to permeate our heart and will as well as our mind.** Intellectual knowledge of the Faith is not enough! It must penetrate our heart and our will: *our in-most thoughts and feelings (heart) and our daily choices (free will).* People who love the Lord and the Catholic Faith, especially the saints, show us that we only turn our life over to the Lord and live our Catholic faith in a radical way - if we have first accepted the gift of His personal love for us in order to transform our mind, heart and will. **To personally accept this divine gift, we**

**must have trust and confidence in the Lord!** We must make the Faith our own, not come to Mass because someone else is making us come, or pray because we are just doing it out of habit - but freely pray and worship at Mass every week (*one hour a week is not too much to ask, in gratitude for all the blessings God has given to us and the occasional Holy Day of Obligation*), and live the moral and doctrinal teachings of our Faith because it is **the way** we return our love to the Lord Jesus and grow ever closer to the most Blessed Trinity- the source of Love.

3. **The Lord in His kindness tries to reach each of us in a profound way - every so often. The saints called this “a moment of spiritual visitation.”** This occurs at **transition points** in our life, e.g., *when we are leaving High School and going out into the “big world”; in college when we can’t figure out what we are to do with our life, and God wants us to turn our life over to Him and His Lordship; for some ppl who have to learn the hard way (see St. Augustine) after experiencing and tasting all the world has to offer in terms of sinful pleasure, be it drinking, drugs, sex, lots of money and fame and power and prestige, and yet in the depths of one’s soul realizing the emptiness and loss of real purpose; after a failed dating or marriage relationship and now realizing we compromised our faith and moral values to please the other person and it left us lost, empty and alone.* All these **moments of crisis (tied in to the mystery of the Cross)**, are moments the Lord wants to come in and let us taste (*experience in the depth of our souls*) His all encompassing love, which will transform our life forever – **if we respond in a spirit of surrender and trust.** Yes, the suffering will sometimes still be there, but with Jesus as King of our heart, mind and will, we will have a new perspective and be willing to bear all things in union with Him, for our own holiness and to draw others to Himself - by all that we say, think and do in a spirit of love, penance and reparation. It’s only when we experience His personal love for us on a deep existential level that we will then want to reach out to others (evangelize) and help them through the gift of the Corporal and Spiritual works of Mercy (see below), in order to draw them to the Lord’s love and gift of salvation (*pray for the grace to see Christ in your neighbor*). Love of God leads to love of neighbor.

May we invite the Kingship of Christ into our life in all areas and pray for His loving reign over the whole world, esp. in these difficult days, until the end of time – when He returns in glory, and evil and sin will finally be eliminated and a New Heavens and a New Earth created, per the Book of Revelation, where His justice, peace and love will reign forever! God bless you.

Spiritual Works of Mercy

1. Counsel the doubtful
2. Instruct the ignorant
3. Admonish the sinner
4. Comfort the sorrowful
5. Forgive injuries
6. Bear wrongs patiently
7. Pray for the living and the dead

Corporal Works of Mercy

- Feed the hungry
- Give drink to the thirsty
- Clothe the naked
- Shelter the homeless
- Visit the sick
- Visit the imprisoned
- Bury the dead