

Feast of Christ the King Year C



Caravaggio, Ecce Homo, 1605/6

THE GOSPEL Luke 23:35-43

Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

Christ,
with your last breath
you cared for the lost and lonely.

Please
remember us.
Call all of us to mind,
each and every one of us,
when you come into your kingdom!
We entrust ourselves, with Dismas, to you,
to your infinite love and mercy, and
like him, we ask simply:
remember
us.

THE FIRST READING 2 Samuel 5:1-3

You shall shepherd my people, Israel.

Guide us into
your kingdom, O Jesus.
Put us on the path of peace.

Raise us as we fall. And hold us awhile.
If we run off to a wild, dark place,
then please pull us
back.

Watch over us
with love.

And shepherd others
through us.



THE SECOND READING Colossians 1:12-20

For in him all the fullness was pleased to dwell.

King Christ,

tell about the “fullness”
that is “pleased to dwell” in you!
Does everything beautiful reside in you?
How about wisdom and endless capacity to forgive?
Or the fullness of your gentle love that cradles all the world?

Please grant us just a small
share of your love.
Let it come to
dwell in
us.

This Sunday we celebrate the Feast of Christ the King. We pray to learn what being 'King' means for Jesus. We may be surprised!

The **First Reading** describes the anointing of David as King of Israel. His people describe him as 'one of us', a person who has led and shepherded them.

The **Gospel** describes the reactions of people to the crucifixion of Jesus. We witness the humility of the thief who recognises his poverty and wrongdoing, and quietly asks Jesus to remember him.

The **Psalm** is one of rejoicing and praise as the people of God come to the house of the Lord to celebrate their freedom.

St Paul speaks of the grace and joy that has come to us through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In Christ, we gain our freedom through the forgiveness of our sin (**Second Reading**).

Today pray to know from the depths of my heart that I am a loved and forgiven sinner, welcomed by God into the light of his glory and joy.

FURTHER REFLECTION ON THE GOSPEL

In the **Gospel** Reading, Christ is crucified. The rulers who caused this crucifixion feel no compassion. They add to his misery by mocking his mission: he saved others; himself he cannot save. One of the two thieves crucified with him mocks him too: hey, Christ, save yourself and us!

Christ the King says nothing. He just hangs there, nailed to the wood of the cross.

Love that is willing to suffer is greater than power that is able to coerce

What the *other* thief says is astonishing. He rebukes the first thief, the one mocking Jesus, in the strongest possible way. "Have you no fear of God?" he says.

What's to fear about the God who lets his King be killed this way?

The whole earth is soaked with the tears of the suffering; and broken humanity is like the flotsam and jetsam everywhere on the ocean of history. What's to fear about God? Where is he?

On the cross—that is the answer.

God is love and all the power of God is there in the love shown by Christ's painful death. To save us, and to bring us to himself in heaven, God will suffer even the torment of death on the cross. Love that is willing to suffer is greater than power that is able to coerce, and that powerful love is there on the cross.

Someone who fears to offend God because God loves him will find Christ in the way the good thief did. Sooner or later, he will hear Christ say to him, "This day you will be with me in paradise." Then he will know the victory of Christ the King, and he will be victorious with Christ. (*Eleonore Stump*)

