

Commentary on the Readings for November 22, 2020

The Feast of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe

Today the whole Church celebrates the Feast of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe. This day used to be known as the Feast of Christ the King or Corpus Christi. In this lofty title, we acknowledge Jesus as supreme ruler over us and give Him jurisdiction over who and what we are. This might have the opposite effect of what we think Jesus wants of us. The "King" keeps us even further away from approaching Him. Americans are not accustomed to royalty and the mere thought of giving up control of our lives is foreign to us. However, if we look closely at the readings for this Sunday, we will see that Jesus is not only approachable; but He calls each of us to come and be a close friend.

The **First Reading** is from the ***Prophet Ezekiel (34:11-17)***. In this passage, we hear God the Father telling the people of Israel in the 6th century BC that He is not pleased with their Leadership. He threatens to abolish their positions and become their leader Himself. All this is done in the context of symbolism of a shepherd tending his flock in a manner fitting of a good shepherd. At this time, in the life of Israel, the people had enough of kings and forced homage and were looking for sincere leadership that would help them find a better life. Thus, the Father promises all of this and more, treating each of His sheep individually.

The **Responsorial Psalm (23:1-6)** is again, the Psalm that we have heard so often recently known as ***"The Lord is my Shepherd."*** This beautiful prayer echoes the First Reading by bringing the loftiness of the relationship of God to Man down to the level of a shepherd tending his sheep with loving care and protection. The "Good Shepherd" will do anything to care for and protect his sheep, even to the point of laying down his life – and so He did!

The **Second Reading** is from ***St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians (15:20-28)***. Here, Paul expands on the above statement by telling us how Jesus, the Son of God, repaired the breach between God and Man created by Adam's sin so that mankind could eventually come back to the Father. Because of this, the Father has given Jesus authority and power to reign over mankind "until He has destroyed every earthly sovereignty, authority and power and put all of God's enemies under His feet." What greater kingship could there be?

The **Gospel Reading** from ***Matthew (25:31-46)*** also uses the humble image of sheep; but this time it is at the Last Judgment when all mankind will be separated between the faithful, represented here by the sheep, from the unfaithful, the goats. Then all mankind will be held accountable and will see how and why they were separated as such. **(First Reading, Ezekiel 34:17).**

Hopefully, you can now understand why this is an important Feast Day. It bestows the proper honor and glory to Jesus Christ, who should be welcomed into our heart and soul, homes and lives every day, not just once a year. Jesus is not concerned with pageantry and fanfare as much as He is about our sincerity, humility and contrition. Therefore, welcome Him into your lives daily. Something to think about during your prayer time this week!

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