

# COME, YOU WHO ARE BLESSED BY MY FATHER.

*Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*

*Whatever you did for one of these least ones, you did for me.*

*Matthew 25:34, 40*



## OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, KING OF THE UNIVERSE

November 22, 2020

### THE SERVANT KING

As we celebrate the solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, many of the traditional hymns and images for the day are joyful and triumphal. For some, these connotations may be perceived as negative. In these days when there are strong divisions within the Church, and when some government leaders are so far away from the people, we need to hear all of today's scriptures, and draw a bigger, fuller picture of Christ as servant king. In Ezekiel, we see God as both the tender, loving shepherd and the one who will judge at the Second Coming. This ties in with Matthew's Gospel and separation of sheep and goats and "whatsoever you do." We pray Psalm 23 with great familiarity and hope. First Corinthians carefully explains to us the order in which all will happen. This is not an evil dictatorship, or a power-hungry leader, but the culmination of a plan that was carefully laid out in love.

### OLD IDEA, RECENT ADDITION

Perhaps it is important to remember that while the image of Christ as King has been known throughout Christianity, this feast was founded in 1925 as a reaction and a response to growing secularism, communism, and atheism that were becoming prevalent after World War I. If we pull back the lens even further, we will remember that throughout history there has seldom been a peaceful time in the Christian world. The Holy Land itself has frequently been a battle ground. There have been schisms and divisions in the history of the church itself, and every church council was convened to try to correct some mistaken notion, world event, or church heresy. Nor has church leadership always had clean hands, and there have been wars, genocides, and insurrections "in the name of Christ." Today, when more and more people are leaving organized religion altogether, and people identify themselves as "spiritual but not religious" or "nones," the need for Christ as leader and ruler and guide is more pressing than ever.

### INHERIT THE KINGDOM

The world in which we live is complex. We are a diverse, global society and there are many issues and opinions ranging from climate change to politics to creed. Sometimes we try and sort it all out, and it is hard to know who and what to believe. One can find multiple takes on the same news story, and social media can easily sway us. Yet when we focus on the Gospel story, it seems very simple indeed. We do not have to know it all or figure it all out. We are not the one on the throne during the Last Judgment. When God starts separating the sheep from the goats, the formula is a simple rule of thumb. "When did you see Christ in others? When did you respond accordingly?" It does not ask if you are Catholic or even Christian; whether you had a police record or an incurable disease; whether you had a PhD or a fifth-grade education, or what languages you spoke. The call is to remember that "Whatsoever you did to the least you did for me." And then there will be the invitation, "Come you who are blessed. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

### TODAY'S READINGS

Ezekiel 34:11-12, 15-17  
Psalm 23:1-2, 2-3, 5-6  
1 Corinthians 15:20-26, 28  
Matthew 25:31-46