

NOV 22: O. T. XXXIV SUNDAY: CHRIST THE KING

This feast of Christ the King, instituted by Pope Pius XI in 1925 to celebrate the jubilee year and the 16th centenary of the Council of Nicaea, the Pope proclaimed: "*Pax Christi in regno Christi*" (the peace of Christ in the reign of Christ). At the entrance of St. Peter's Basilica we see "**Christus vincit! Christus regnat! Christus imperat!**" Christ conquers, Christ rules, Christ reigns.

This Sunday is the last Sunday of the liturgical year when the Holy Mother Church honors Christ under the title "King of the Universe". The Kingship of Jesus is a theme carried from the OT. In N.T., Jesus is given a variety of names: Messiah or Christ, Savior, Emmanuel, Son of David, Son of man, Prince of Peace, Counselor, Servant of Yahweh, the Good Shepherd, Lamp of God, and so forth. Yet, no title and no number of titles ever suffice to adequately express all that Christ is, his beauty, his wisdom, his power and his love.

The Biblical basis of the feast: In the O.T., the title "Christ the King" has its roots both in Scripture and in the whole theology of the *Kingdom of God*. In most of the messianic prophecies given in the Old Testament books of Samuel, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Daniel, Christ the Messiah is represented as a king.

The N.T. tells that Jesus is the long awaited king of the Jews. a) In the Annunciation, recorded in Lk 13:2-33, we read: "*The Lord God will make him a king, as his ancestor David was, and He will be the king of the descendants of Jacob forever and His kingdom will never end.*" In fact, the *Kingdom of God* is the centre of Jesus' teaching and the phrase '*kingdom of God*' occurs in the Gospels 122 times, 90 of which are spoken by Jesus. b) The Magi from the Far East came to Jerusalem and asked the question: (Mt. 2:2) "*Where is the baby born to be the king of the Jews? We saw his star... and we have come to worship him.*" c) During the royal reception given to Jesus on Palm Sunday, the Jews shouted: (Lk.19: 38) "*God bless the king, who comes in the name of the Lord.*"

d) During the trial of Jesus described in today's Gospel, Pilate asked the question: (Jn.18: 33): "*Are you the king of the Jews?*" Jesus replied: "*You say that I am a king. I was born and came into this world for this one purpose, to bear witness to the Truth.*" e) The signboard hung over Jesus' head on the cross read: "*Jesus the Nazarene, king of the Jews.*" f) Before his ascension into heaven, Jesus declared: (Mt. 28:18): "*I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth.*" g) Finally, in Matthew 25:31, we read that Christ the King will come in glory to judge us on the day.

As we celebrate the kingship of Christ today, let us thank the Lord for the last wonderful and grace filled liturgical year where all of us have experienced in different level the loving, caring, and healing presence of the Lord. Let this celebration make us more loyal to him by responding to his invitation: "*Take my yoke upon you, and learn from*

me; for I am gentle and humble in heart" (Matthew 11:29). By cultivating in our lives the gentle and humble mind of Christ, we show others that Jesus Christ is in indeed our king and that he is in charge of our lives.