

THE KING WHO LOVES TO SHARE HIS KINGDOM

On this last Sunday of the liturgical year the Church celebrates Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe.

Throughout the year, the Gospel of Matthew has presented Jesus as the new Moses, who has brought down to his people God's new commandment of love. The Gospel has also shown Jesus as the promised Messiah, the Son of David, the King-Shepherd of Israel, whose mission was to gather the scattered sheep, the people of Israel and all nations, to reconcile them with God and unite them as "one" under the banner of Love.

In the Gospel Reading for this Sunday (Matthew 25:31-46), Jesus is King of the universe who calls all peoples to receive judgement on whether they have responded to his teachings on love, and shared it with others or not. Every action and every choice ever made will be revealed: nothing will remain hidden that will not be in the open. Accordingly the soul will "inherit the kingdom prepared.. from the foundation of the world" (Matthew 25:34) or receive "eternal damnation" (Matthew 25:41, 46).

A superficial reading of this Gospel page may seem to present a different Jesus than the compassionate and merciful one, who welcomes sinners and eats with them. In reality it is the same Jesus, the King who gave his life for the salvation of his subjects, the King crowned with a crown of thorns, having the cross as his throne. At his judgment seat he chooses to identify himself with the sick, the prisoners, the hungry and thirsty, the poor and all marginalized, the least of our brothers and sisters.

Therefore, on this feast day of Christ the King, the Church encourages us to live without fear, but to say YES to God's command: "YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I THE LORD YOUR GOD AM HOLY"(Leviticus 19:2).

Jesus asks you and me:

"HOW HAVE YOU LOVED?"

"HAVE YOU LOVED ONE ANOTHER AS I HAVE LOVED YOU?" (John 13:34-35);

"HAVE YOU FORGIVEN AS I HAVE FORGIVEN YOU?" (Matthew 6:12-15)

Jesus also says:

"I REPROVE AND DISCIPLINE THOSE WHOM I LOVE. BE EARNEST, THEREFORE, AND REPENT. LISTEN! I AM STANDING AT THE DOOR KNOCKING; IF YOU HEAR MY VOICE AND OPEN THE DOOR, I WILL COME IN TO YOU AND EAT WITH YOU, AND YOU WITH ME." (Revelation 3:19-20).

During this pandemic meditate on Jesus' encouraging words above. Stay close to Him as he is close to you. Do not be afraid (John 15:7, 9). He loves you.