

FROM FR. JASON



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As the liturgical year draws to its majestic close, we are summoned by Holy Mother Church to contemplate the supreme mystery of our faith: the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe. Let us not celebrate this feast as one among many, nor as a mere doctrinal footnote tacked onto the end of November. No! This is the crown of the entire paschal mystery, the kerygma proclaimed from the rooftops: Jesus Christ, crucified, dead, risen, and ascended, is Lord of all creation, King of history, and Victor over every power of darkness. The heavens and the earth, the angels and the demons, the living and the dead - all bend the knee before Him who sits at the right hand of the Father, yet who remains hidden in the humility of the Eucharistic species. Do we believe this?

Let us enter deeply into the Word that the Church gives us this Sunday. The Gospel is taken from John 18:33-37, the dramatic dialogue between Jesus and Pontius Pilate in the praetorium. Pilate, the representative of Caesar, the embodiment of worldly power, asks the question that echoes through every human heart: “Are you a king?” The Lord’s response is not a political platform; it is the revelation of a kingdom not of this world. “If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would fight...” Here is the scandal and the glory of the Cross! Christ does not reign by the sword, by votes, by economic leverage, or by media manipulation. He reigns by allowing Himself to be stripped, scourged, crowned with thorns, and lifted high upon the wood. From that throne of apparent defeat, He draws all men to Himself. Have we learned this truth in the school of the Cross: the kingship of Jesus is kenotic - a self-emptying love that stoops down to wash the feet of betrayers, to forgive executioners, to embrace the thief who repents at the last moment?

The First Reading from Daniel 7:13-14 unveils the apocalyptic vision: “One like a son of man coming on the clouds of heaven... His dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not pass away.” This is no earthly monarchy destined to crumble. This is the eternal reign of the Lamb who was slain, whose blood has ransomed people from every tribe and tongue, people and nation. And the Second Reading from Revelation 1:5-8 thunders the doxology: “To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood... to him be glory and dominion forever!” We are not indulging in pious nostalgia. We are entering the heavenly liturgy, where the martyrs under the altar cry out, “How long, O Lord?” and are answered by the silence of the Lamb who has already conquered.

This feast invites a radical conversion from each of us. Christ is not a king among others, tolerating rivals on the throne of our hearts. He is the only King. Every idolatry can be dethroned. The idolatry of money, which promises security but leaves us empty. The idolatry of success, which measures worth by productivity and applause. The idolatry of self-sufficiency, which refuses to kneel in the scrutiny of conscience. The idolatry of a Christianity without the Cross, a comfortable faith that avoids the narrow gate.

Have we seen how the Lord uses our littleness to manifest His kingship? He can take our broken marriages and make them icons of His spousal love for the Church. He can take our wayward children and, through the patience and love of parents, draw them back to the fold. He can take our failures in the workplace, our humiliations, our illnesses, and transform them into thrones from which He reigns. The Lord does not choose the capable; He makes capable those He chooses. This is the paradox of the Kingdom: the blind see, the lame walk, the poor have the Good News proclaimed to them.

The King is coming - not in the clouds of apocalyptic spectacle (though that day will come), but in the humility of the Word proclaimed, the Eucharist broken, the brother forgiven. He is coming in the events of our lives, if we allow Him to reign.

Peace,