

SOLEMNITY OF CHRIST THE KING  
Year B: Dn 7:13-14; Ps 93; Rv 1:5-8; Jn 18:33b-37  
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On this feast of Christ the King, we celebrate the truth that Christ rules in our lives the way a king rules in his kingdom. In fact, if we are true disciples of Christ, true Christians, we should consider ourselves loyal subjects of His Kingdom – we should be proud and grateful to belong to the Kingdom of Christ. But it's important to understand both the nature and the location of this Kingdom.

In the Gospel, we heard Pontius Pilate say to Jesus, when He was arrested, “*Are you the King of the Jews?*” Pilate was concerned that Jesus was claiming to be an earthly ruler who would challenge the power and authority of Rome. But Jesus replied by saying, “*My kingdom does not belong to this world.*” This answer of Christ might make some think He was saying His kingdom does not exist in this world and has nothing to do with this world in which we live.

But when Jesus said His kingdom does not belong to this world, He was explaining the *origin* of His kingdom – not the *location* of His Kingdom. He was explaining that His kingdom is not *from* this world, but it does exist *in* this world. In fact, His kingdom can have a great effect and impact on this world, as we hope it does.

The Kingdom of Christ is not *from* this world, but it does exist *in* this world wherever a soul responds to Christ in faith. To belong to the Kingdom of Christ requires having a spiritual life, which is a living relationship with Christ. What do we mean by that? We mean speaking to Christ every day in prayer, and listening to what He says to us in His Word recorded in the Sacred Scriptures.

And this relationship with Christ requires believing that His teachings are the truth. When Pilate said to Jesus, “*Then you are a king?*”, Jesus answered, “*You say I am a king. For this I was born and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.*” Jesus was explaining that belonging to His Kingdom means accepting what He revealed to the world as the truth.

When Jesus came into the world, He brought the truth with Him – the truth about the mystery of our lives and how we're supposed to live. Jesus said, “*I am the way and the truth and the life*” (Jn 14:6). His teachings are the truth about reality and how we are to live during this life here on earth, and we belong to His

Kingdom when we accept His teachings as true. This is also the glue that holds us together as a Church – shared beliefs about what is true and the acts of charity that flow from those beliefs. This is also why Sacred Scripture describes the Church of Christ as “*the pillar and foundation of truth*” (1Tim 3:15). It is the mission of the Church to safeguard and spread the truth revealed by Christ.

This is also why the Kingdom of Christ *does* exist here in this world, even though it is not *from* this world. The Kingdom of Christ exists wherever a soul accepts Christ’s teachings as true and strives to live according to them, and that starts here in this life and this world. This is why, the night before He died, Christ prayed to His Father about His disciples: “[T]hey do not belong to the world any more than I belong to the world. I do not ask that you take them out of the world but that you keep them from the evil one. They do not belong to the world any more than I belong to the world. Consecrate them in the truth. Your word is truth” (Jn 17:14-17).

So, the Kingdom of Christ is a kingdom of truth – the truth that was revealed by Christ and the truth that governs our lives. It rules our lives the way a benign, compassionate and merciful king rules his kingdom. It provides direction and guidance for our lives. It steers us to what is good and holy, and guides us away from what is evil and harmful. Ultimately, this truth leads us all the way to eternal life. But, as Christians, we start living according to this truth here in this life, which is why the Kingdom of Christ does exist here and now, wherever a soul responds in faith to Christ.

So, we have this great feast of Christ the King to remind us that if we believe what Christ taught, we are loyal subjects of His Kingdom, and He rules and governs our lives. This Kingdom to which we belong here and now by faith is also an eternal kingdom that will continue forever in Heaven, in worship of Christ the King. In the first reading, from the Book of Daniel, we heard a description of the prophetic vision of the Kingdom of Christ in Heaven: “*one like a Son of man coming, on the clouds of heaven ... reached the Ancient One and was presented before him ... [and] received dominion, glory, and kingship; all peoples, nations, and languages serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not be taken away, his kingship shall not be destroyed.*”

May we all strive to accept the truths taught by Christ, so that we will be faithful subjects of His Kingdom, both here in this life and forever in Heaven.