



Bible Study Solemnity of Christ the King of the Universe Year A

**St. Maria Goretti and
St. Peter Claver
Parishes**

**November 29, 2017
Volume 1 Issue 48**

“Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or ill or in prison, and not minister to your needs?’ He will answer them, ‘Amen, I say to you, what you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for me.’” Matt 25:44-46 (NABRE)

Reading I: Isaiah 5:1-7

THERE IS A KING IN YOU! *“I know life has challenged you, But the King in me speaks to the king in you, You were born to rule.”* This verse from Donald Lawrence’s celebrated hymn, entitled, *“There is a King in Me,”* captures the theme for the solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ The King. It reminds that us that no matter what we have endured, there is a divine King in all of us who dwells in us and to sustain us so that we can sustain others. We know that there is a King in us since we are made in God’s image and that King is alive in us through our rebirth in Baptism. The King in each one of us requires us to speak to the King in in others to remind them that we are all members of the Body of Jesus Christ who are called to serve each other. The image of the Good Shepherd who cares for the weak and the infirm is affirmation of the King in each one of us.

**I, MYSELF, WILL PASTURE MY
SHEEP.**

The Church on this last Sunday summarizes the life work of Christ the King with the image of a Good Shepherd. He is the one who lives in us and who will return in Glory.

In the first reading, Ezekiel reminds them that God is with them. He encourages those exiled in Babylon that God Himself will shepherd and care for them. Ezekiel became a prophet in Babylon in 597 B. C. As an exile himself, he was the first prophet to receive the call to prophecy outside of the “promised land”. He prepared his people for the inevitable destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in 587 B.C. After the destruction of Jerusalem, Ezekiel saw his people as the hope of Israel’s restoration, once their time in exile ended. In 34:1 the King in him preached against the shepherds of Israel whose infidelity contributed to Israel’s destruction. They fed themselves rather than rather than their flock (vv. 1-10). God promises through Ezekiel, that He Himself will shepherd His people. He will care for them and will rule over them in peace, like David (v. 23). This prophecy foretells the ministry of Christ, the Good Shepherd. It reminds us that there is a King in each one of us. **DISCUSSION QUESTION:** What did God see in the Israel that merited His personal attention?

Ezekiel

Ezekiel means God will strengthen. (See 1 Chron 24:16, "Jehezkel.") He is One of the great prophets, the son of Buzi the priest (Ezek 1:3). He was one of the Jewish exiles who settled at Tel-Abib, on the banks of the Chebar, "in the land of the Chaldeans." He was probably carried away captive with Jehoiachin (1:2; 2 Kings 24:14-16) about 597 B.C. His prophetic call came to him "in the fifth year of Jehoiachin's captivity" (594 B.C.). He had a house in the place of his exile, where he lost his wife, in the ninth year of his exile, by some sudden and unforeseen stroke (Ezek 8:1; 24:18). He held a prominent place among the exiles, and was frequently consulted by the elders (8:1; 11:25; 14:1; 20:1). His ministry extended over twenty-three years (29:17), 595 B.C. - 573 B.C., during part of which he was contemporary with Daniel (14:14; 28:3) and Jeremiah, and probably also with Obadiah. The time and manner of his death are unknown. His reputed tomb is pointed out in the neighborhood of Bagdad, at a place called Keffil. (From Easton's Bible Dictionary, PC Study Bible formatted electronic database Copyright © 2003, 2006 BibleSoft, Inc. All rights reserved.)

Reading II: 1 Cor. 15:20-26, 28

THERE IS A KING IN YOU! These verses have a unique reference to the Kingship of Jesus the Christ. They also establish our unique relationship with Jesus through His resurrection. Jesus is the first to be raised from the dead. He is the first fruit of the resurrection. In the liturgy of ancient Israel, the first fruit of the crop was offered to God as a way of consecrating the whole crop. In the same way, Jesus, who took human form, is not only the first to be raised in glory, but His resurrected humanity offers assurance that we, the harvest of believers, will also be raised from the dead. (Acts 26:23) Because Jesus dwells in us, we worship one Lord, share one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. St. Paul then compares Adam and Jesus (vv. 21-28), the two individuals who have the greatest impact on the human race. Sin came through Adam. Salvation came through Jesus, who reversed the damage caused by sin by dwelling in us. His dwelling in us gives us hope that we too will rise because the last enemy to be conquered by Jesus is death. **DISCUSSION QUESTION:** What can you do to ensure that you will rise with Jesus on the last day?

Gospel: Matthew 25:31-46

THERE IS A KING IN YOU! *Christ beside me, Christ before me, Christ behind me, Christ within me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me.* These words attributed to St. Patrick affirms that Christ the King of the Universe lives in us.

The readings for the final Sunday of the church year direct our focus to Christ the King of the Universe. Who is this King? He is the one who made us. He is the one who breathed His life in us. He is the one who impressed His image on each human being. He is the one who redeemed us from eternal destruction. Christ the Creator and Deliverer lives in every human being. For this reason, we are called to serve each other. When we serve others, we serve Him. Yes, the King of the Universe chose to live through us. There is a King in you!

In chapters 24 and 25, the Gospel of St. Matthew sets the tone of a great judgment through a sequence of parables. In each parable, Jesus urged His disciples to be ready for the coming of the Son of Man. In the Gospel reading for this Sunday, St. Matthew reveals what will happen when He arrives. The Lord Jesus will "repay everyone according to his conduct" (16:27). The scene of the Son of Man in final judgment over every thought and act of mankind is simply awesome (v. 31). Reaching back to the first reading (v. 32-33) St. Matthew presents the Son of Man in the role of the shepherd who judges, that is, divides His flock from the goats. This may well be Middle Eastern imagery that reflects the practice of herdsmen of grazing all their flocks at the same time and place, and then separating them later by kind and value. The sheep represent the saints, while the goats represent the condemned. The sheep are placed in the place of honor (1 Kings 2:19; Ps. 110:1). Those on the right are "Blessed" and will enjoy the kingdom (vv. 41-45). Why will the "righteous" sheep be treated with such honor? Because they recognized and allowed the loving, and merciful nature of the King of the Universe to work through them. They will inherit the kingdom of heaven. Their lives demonstrated compassion for the lowly, care for the needy and forgiveness for the offender. It was their service to other human beings that earned them their place of honor at the King's right side. In caring for the needy, they cared for the Lord Himself. The identity of the righteous is established by Christ as those who need the most in our society (v. 37). Our place in the kingdom of heaven will be measured by our service to those with whom Christ identified, that is, "the least of these" (v. 40). The King in us require that we serve the King in them. There is a King in you! **DISCUSSION QUESTION:** Why did Jesus, the King of the Universe, identify with the poor and die such a shameful death on the cross?

Pray About It!

Monday

Read Matthew 25:31-46. Make a financial donation to the poor.

Tuesday

Read 1 Corinthians 15:20-26. Remove yourself from those things that will prevent your resurrection.

Wednesday

Read Ezekiel 34:11-17. Are you a good shepherd?

Thursday

Visit someone who is shut-in or imprisoned.

Friday

Attend Mass and receive the Eucharist.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church Teaches the Tradition of the Works of Mercy.

2447 "The works of mercy are charitable actions by which we come to the aid of our neighbor in his spiritual and bodily necessities. Instructing, advising, consoling, comforting are spiritual works of mercy, as are forgiving and bearing wrongs patiently. The corporal works of mercy consist especially in feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and imprisoned, and burying the dead. Among all these, giving alms to the poor is one of the chief witnesses to fraternal charity: it is also a work of justice pleasing to God. ..." The Judgment scene from St. Matthew 25:42-46, is a source of the Catholic Church's tradition of the Corporal Works of Mercy.

Resources: *Philippians*, Ivan Havener, O.S.B. ; Collegeville Bible Commentary, The Liturgical Press, Collegeville Minn., p. 1165-1168; *Living Liturgy Spirituality, Celebration, and Catechesis for Sundays and Solemnities Year A 2014*, Joyce Zimmerman, C. PP. S. Kathleen Harmon, S.ND. de N., Christopher W. Canlon, S. M. Liturgical Press Collegeville, Mn. pp. 222- 225; Scripture texts in this work are taken from the *New American Bible, revised edition* © 2010, 1991, 1986, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Washington, D.C. and are used by permission of the copyright owner. All Rights Reserved. No part of the New American Bible may be reproduced in any form without permission in writing from the copyright owner. *There is a King in you*. Songwriters: DONALD L. LAWRENCE© Universal Music Publishing Group For non-commercial use only. Data from: LyricFind <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catechism/catechism-of-the-catholic-church/epub/index.cfm#>; <http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/keywords/righteousness.html#iP9vB03FpSW2sGp.99>.

This meditation is prepared by Deacon Terrel J. Broussard for personal use in Adult Faith Formation at St. Peter Claver and St. Maria Goretti Parishes in New Orleans, La. ©2017