

Viva Christo Rey!; Long live Christ the King!

With these words, Blessed Miguel Pro was martyred in 1927

Only 2 years after Pope Pius XIII established this feast in 1925

This feast brings our year to a close

It tells us something that is important

Christ reigns not by force

He is enthroned on a cross

His body broken and bloodied, barely able to speak

His final message is one of forgiveness, love and mercy

This is our king, who does not encourage us to avoid our cross

But to embrace it and follow him

It is not a feast of Christ the president

The Prime Minister or General Secretary

Although we do not have a monarchy here

We know what a monarchy is

The king is not one that is elected

They are either born into that role

Or they take the role by force

The average length of a monarchy over the years is less than 10 years

Christ is indeed born into the role of king

Not of human descent

But of divine descent

And he took the position by force

Through his passion, death and resurrection

And his is a kingdom that will not end

There is something else we see in countries that have a monarchy

Although the king is not what they once were

Much of their power has been reduced

Many are not much more than a figurehead

The people love their king and queen

They love what he represents

The glory and prestige of the past

It is more than what their nation was or is

It is about what their nation could be

What it should be

Christ the King is all of this and more

We are his subjects by faith and nature

We have a king who has won the undying love of his subjects

By dying for us

And rising for us

His is a kingdom of truth and justice

A kingdom of love and mercy

It is the spiritual foundation for any government in the world

His kingdom is not of this world

Because this world could never contain him

It did not originate here

And it will not end when this world ends

But it is in the world

He has a role to play in the history of the world

We have our place in the history of the world

He came into the world to testify to the truth

This is the foundation of his kingdom

And that is a threat to the powers of the world

Both religious and political

In the past, the present and the future

We see all this in our readings today

The reading from Daniel speaks to us still today

The terrorist attacks

The brutality of dictators

Corruption in politics

Cultural confusion of the world

These things affected the Jewish people of Daniel's time

And they affect us today

One night Daniel experienced a vision

Beasts rising from the earth, representing kingdoms of the world

A lion, a bear, a leopard, and one that defied description

Each one ravaging the world for a time

Then another

Not a kingdom, but a man coming from heaven

One like a Son of Man

He was given final authority, power and glory

We know him as King of Kings and Lord of lords

Jesus Christ

The Greek empire, the Roman Empire

The Aztec empire, the Ottoman Empire

One day perhaps the American experiment we all love

Gone

But Jesus Christ remains

His Kingdom is the only one that will not end

The reading from Revelation describes his return

Every eye shall see him

All people will lament

Sin is a worldwide human aspect of life

It does not belong to one culture or time

Abuse, slander, theft, fornication, murder

These are universal

These are what nailed Christ to the cross

His redemption is universal

He died and rose for all people for all time

From Adam and Eve to the last one born before he returns

All the military muscle and the economic powers

All the philosophies and religious off-shoots are powerless

None of these combined can produce the healing

The forgiveness that flow from Christ's passion and resurrection

The very thing that is present in each and every Mass

And this is sacrifice of Christ is personal

He did not come to save mankind

He did not come to be a generic king

He came to save you

And he desires to be your king

My king

His kingdom is not off on some planet in outer space

We enter his kingdom through our baptism

We grow and mature in this kingdom through the sacraments

The Eucharist, Penance and Confirmation

Marriage, Holy Orders and Anointing of the Sick

Through the sacraments we have spiritual strength and moral power

To bring us through this world into the next

His mercy frees each of us from our sin

His kingdom is a personal kingdom

It is there for all human beings to embrace

His kingdom is not of the world

But it is in the world

Living in his kingdom builds a better world

His is a kingdom of true freedom

Lived in service to what is good and just

Exercising this freedom affects others

But more importantly, it affects us

When we live our freedom well

The world is a better place

St Jose Maria Escriva put it this way:

'Your task as a Christian citizen

Is to help see Christ's life and freedom preside over all aspects of modern life

Culture, the economy, work and rest

Family life and social relations'

If Christ is truly our king

No part of our life

None of it

Not sports or hunting

Not philosophy or theology

Not the environment or culture

Nothing separates us from our king

If He is truly our king

We strive to build his kingdom on earth

While we wait for his return to complete it

We do this by living the corporeal and spiritual works of mercy

Feeding the hungry, clothing the naked and admonishing sinners

Forgiving offenses, bearing wrongs and praying for the living and dead

Doing all of these and more, bit by bit

A little each day

Beginning with our family, our parish and our town

We will radically change our church and the world

Viva Christo Rey!