

Commentary on the Readings for November 20, 2016

The Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the King of the Universe

Today, the last Sunday in Ordinary Time, the whole Church will celebrate the great **Feast of Our Lord Jesus, Christ the King**. So what does that mean, or should mean to us today? Let us take a few minutes to really get to understand this important event. In today's modern society, particularly with young people, the words "awesome," "greatest and maybe even "humongous" are used frequently to describe something or someone who is of the utmost importance to them. Usually it doesn't last long, only until something or someone comes along that seems to be better. **Stability** is certainly not an important issue for them; and yet, that is just what people need today. Let us see how this quality is found in the following readings:

The **First Reading** is from the *Second Book of Samuel (5:1-3)*. In the early days of the reign of King David (11th century BC) there was no organization or structure within Judaism. Each of the tribes of Jacob had their own leader who made himself "king" of the tribe. This created more friction and disorder and hindered security. With great persuasion and promises of security, (based on allegiance to the God of Israel), David was successful in uniting all of Israel under his leadership as their King, thus beginning what is often called the "**Golden Age of Judaism.**"

The **Responsorial Psalm** is (*122:1-5*). This Psalm reflects the importance of the City of Jerusalem and particularly its temple which was a revered symbol of God's presence among His people. To the people of that time, the temple was looked upon as the "Palace of the King of Heaven" and a symbol of His strength and power.

The **Second Reading** is from *St. Paul's Letter to the Colossians (1:12-20)*. This is one of Paul's great letters to the gentile people calling them to leave their pagan idols and ideas behind and to seek the God of Heaven and Earth in the Person of Jesus Christ. Paul then goes on to describe who this Jesus is by enumerating many of His divine attributes: "...image of the invisible God, firstborn of all creation, for Him were created all things visible and invisible, ...etc." How great it would be if we could put away all of our iPads, smart phones, tablets, etc. for at least one day a week and worship the same Person of Jesus Christ, the King who is, who was and who always will be.

The **Gospel Reading** is from *Luke (23:35-43)*. This is the familiar crucifixion scene where Jesus, hanging on the cross, is mocked and jeered by the crowds who moments before declared: "We have no king but Caesar." However, one man, the so-called "good" thief, asks Jesus for forgiveness and, if he had his way, would have changed his lifestyle forever. He is rewarded with a promise of Paradise. And, as the Centurion says a little later, "**Truly, this man was the Son of God,**" the same King we worship and honor today.

Today's society is so consumed with gadgets and brain-washed by the media and politics that it is worse than ancient Judaism and is headed toward the same fate. We look for peace and stability but are not looking for it in the right place. So I challenge you to put aside all of your distractions and truly worship the Lord God who lives forever, **Jesus, Christ the King.** **MFB**