

Christ the King
November 22, 2015

I don't know who first uttered these words but they offer us an important bit of wisdom: *If there is nothing above us we will be consumed by all that is around us.*

Our nation's Founding Fathers recognized that truth when they wrote: *We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.*

Our human dignity, rights and freedoms come don't come to us from the President, Congress or the Supreme Court, they come to us from God our Creator. No king, ruler, or president confers them on us.

What our Founding Fathers introduced back then was a radical experiment because the people in the rest of the world were governed back then by kings, dictators, and totalitarians who ruled as if people were their possessions, as if their subjects belonged to them and not to God.

The situation in the world wasn't much better in the early 1900's, when World War I had been fought as well as a time when Communism, Nazism and Secularism were all on the rise. And it was during this time of upheaval that on December 11, 1925 Pope Pius XI established the Solemnity of Christ the King for the entire Catholic Church to be celebrated at the end of the Church's liturgical year.

As interesting as all that history may be, we need to pay attention to what is meant by the image of Christ as king. What sort of king are we being asked to recog-

nize? What do we understand to be the kingship of Christ?

As Christians we claim Jesus Christ to be our King. We find ourselves under His kingship where he will establish his justice and peace.

But in order to do that, He relies on our faithfulness, He relies on our cooperation, and He relies on the gift of our very lives and souls, in order to reveal his kingdom here on earth as it is in heaven.

We've often heard that we are supposed to be "in the world but not of the world." At first that may not sound possible but our Catholic faith calls us *not* to escape the world but to bring holiness amidst all that is unholy.

Christ's kingdom of priests (and that includes everyone here) are empowered by God, to consecrate and sanctify the world by bringing out the original holiness in which God created it.

After all, "God sent His Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. (John 3:17)

In our shared priesthood, the whole world is your altar and mine, and we need to call down on it a God-given empowerment to overcome consumerism, sexism, exploitation, injustice, and secularism.

This is the way it is in Christ's kingdom. If Christ's kingdom is to be revealed here on earth, made real in our world as it is in heaven, we have to work to make it so.

We must guard against presumption and arrogance in thinking that God will establish His kingdom without any effort on our part, in spite of our indifference, our neglect, and even our rejection of Him

If Christ is not our king then the principalities and powers of this world will rule us.

If God is not our Father and Christ is not our king then we will create our own gods and goddesses, and they will give us nothing. In the end we will have betrayed ourselves and lost our citizenship in the everlasting kingdom of God.

If Christ is not our king, if we do not live every day of our with the sure and certain knowledge that there is someone above us, then we will be in danger of being consumed by all that is around us.

But if Christ *is* our King, then the powers of this world *cannot* hold us in their grip. Our freedom will be assured in what St. Paul called "the glorious freedom of the sons and daughters of God."