

Fr. Romeo Evangelista Homily
Sunday, November 20, 2022
Christ the King
Cycle C

Four Catholic women are having a coffee. The first tells her friends, “My son is a priest. When he walks into a room, everyone calls him Father”.

The second woman said, “My son is a Bishop. When he walks into a room people say, Your Excellency”.

The third woman said smugly, “My son is a Cardinal. When he walks into a room people say, Your Eminence”.

The fourth woman sips her coffee in silence. She finally says, “My son is a gorgeous, 6-foot 4 male model. When he walks into a room, people say – Oh My God”.

Today is the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe. We cannot overstate the fact that Jesus as a King is totally different from the kings of his day and age.

Notice the contrast in today’s gospel reading between the type of king the Jewish “rulers” were expecting the Messiah to be and the kind of leader Jesus actually was and is. Prompted by the Roman inscription nailed above the head of the crucified Jesus, his enemies logically taunt him, “If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!”

Luke puts these words into the mouth of one of the criminals: “Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us.” Real kings take care of themselves first. In Luke’s gospel, Jesus responds by instinctively taking care of someone else. The other criminal crucified next to him pleads, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” This completely different King responds, “Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.”

While hanging and dying on the cross, Jesus remains to be a person for others. No matter the pain Jesus is suffering, he is always concerned for the pain of others. He is always focused on others, not on himself. It is very important to always remember

this. It is essential to know what Christ the King is about, because we should be about the same thing. We should be like him: a person for others, always concerned for the well-being of others. We are constantly tempted to be self-centered. Like there is this voice that says to us:

“Take care of yourself first, before others!”

“Focus on yourself, not on others.”

“Think of your own welfare first before the well-being of others.”

“Pursue the good of your family first before the common good.”

Our popular culture has convincing ways of telling us: “Your life is about you....it is about your dreams and ambitions...it is about your own plans and projects...it is about getting things for yourself...it is about satisfying your desires and needs...it is about accumulating material possessions, grabbing political power, succeeding and achieving, having the esteem of others, enjoying yourself.”

As we honor Christ the King, a completely different King, let us renew our commitment to follow him, to be like him. Let us allow Christ the King to help us to make the shift from being self-centered to being God-centered...from building our own kingdom of wealth, power and honor to building God’s kingdom of peace, justice and love...from aggressively doing our own plans and projects to faithfully doing God’s will...from being caught up in our worldly wants and desires to being captivated by the gospel values...from pursuing our selfish interests and ambitions to participating in the life and mission of Christ.

The solemnity we celebrate today challenges us to ask this question: Who or what comes first in my life? Our participation in this celebration should be our way of saying that we place Jesus first in our lives at all times...that Jesus is truly the Lord and King of our lives...that we belong completely to Christ the King.

As Christians our entire life, our entire being belongs utterly to him, and we can say with St. Paul, as a matter of life principle: It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me”.