

**JESUS CHRIST, THE KING OF THE UNIVERCE; Cycle – C; Nov. 20th 22
2 Samuel 5:1-3; Colossians 1: 12-20; Luke 23: 35-43**

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

In 1950 king Farouk of Egypt told a group of reporters that soon enough there would be only five kings left in the world; the king of diamonds, the king of spades, the king of clubs, the king of hearts and the king of England. Those who play the cards know who the first four kings are. Yes, he was true, today only a handful of kings are left in the world including the king of England. Perhaps, he has not heard about the real King of the hearts, Jesus Christ. Jesus is the only King who never had a material kingdom to claim in his name, though the Jews expected the Messiah to be the successor of David to rule over Israel. But at the same time he has a kingdom without boundaries and he will be the King forever. Because he is the King of heart; he is the king who rules in the hearts of 2 billion Christians all over the world. As he was living he never had a throne or crown. But as he was dying his throne happened to be the wooden cross and the crown he had was made out of desert thorns. Instead of guards standing at his sides, two criminals were hanging with him on both sides. If Pilate had put a sign above his head on the cross, reading, “**Jesus, the King of the Jews**” was nothing but a mockery. Though there wasn’t any apparent qualification to consider Jesus to be a King, the early Christians and the Church Fathers had no hesitation to call him to be the King of kings. But 1900 years passed before the Church declared it as an official Feast. It was Pope Pious XI who established the Feast of Christ the King in 1925 as the world was coming out of the ashes of World War I.

We may wonder on what Biblical foundation the Church considers Jesus to be the King. As we read in the prophecies of the Old Testament, the Messiah was supposed to be the descendant of David the King. In the New Testament too Jesus is referred to be the King. For instance, at the time of the annunciation, in the gospel of Luke, the angel says to Mary, “**He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever and of his kingdom there will be no end**” (Luke 1: 32-33).

Of course, it was the expectation of Israel that a powerful ruler would arise from the House of David who would be the Messiah. But we don’t have any instance where Jesus claims to be the king. According to John’s gospel, after the multiplication of the loaves the crowd wanted to make Jesus to be the king; but he ran away to the mountain alone. When Peter declared at Caesarea Philippi, “**You**

are the Messiah, the son of the living God” (Mt 16:16), Peter acknowledged Jesus to be the King. But Jesus knew that Peter was expecting a material king from him. Similar was the expectation of the other disciples too. If this is the fact, why do we celebrate the Feast with so much importance? Some scholars try to give us an answer to this question. They see that when Pope Pius XI established this feast in 1925 he wrote a document to explain ‘*the why?*’ The Pope said, **“The people of the day had thrust Jesus Christ and his holy law out of their lives. As long as individuals and states refuse to submit to the way of our Savior, there will be no hopeful prospect of a lasting peace among nations.”** It is clear that the Pope didn’t mean Jesus to be considered as the material king rather he should be the “King of hearts”, King of our families and the king of our societies and nation.

Unlike the other material kings or rulers of the world, Jesus wants to be the ruler of the hearts of the followers; He is the King of benevolence, compassion and love. Once he takes over our lives and families, we are well protected; well settled and well composed. We read an incident in Matthew 14 where we see the disciples in the boat being tossed by the storm. So Jesus approached the boat walking on the water. **Matthew says that as soon as Jesus entered the boat the wind died down.** Yes, that is the difference taking place when Jesus enters our lives and families. These days we are tossed by the wind of physical ailments, mental illness, stress, frustration, depression, marriage break up etc. Many run from pillar to post seeking for solutions. They have absolute trust in doctors, medicines and professionals. They think that the doctors, the psychologists or counselors can fix their problems. But their power is limited. When we allow Jesus to take hold of us and when we approach Jesus for help, no doubt, the wind will die down.

Perhaps, America is the richest country in the world. But why do millions of people seek treatment for depression and anxieties daily? The reason is very simple. People try to build up their life without Jesus. Please remember the words in Psalm 127, **“Unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain who build. Unless the Lord guard the city, in vain does the guard keep watch.”** Without the help of Jesus they labor, but no gain at all. That is why Jesus makes it very clear in John’s gospel 15, **“Without me you can do nothing.”** And also in Matthew’s gospel 6:33 Jesus says, **“But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things will be given you besides.”** Let us keep Jesus to be our leader and without him we will be in darkness.