

Today we celebrate the last Sunday of the liturgical year: The Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe. In the Gospel chosen for this celebration, Jesus the King of the Universe reveals some of the essential requirements for admission to His glorious, eternal, kingdom:



*Jesus said to his disciples: “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit upon his glorious throne, and all the nations will be assembled before him. And he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will place the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. Then the king will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who*

*are blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.’ Then the righteous will answer him and say, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you?’ And the king will say to them in reply, ‘Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.’ Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you accursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, a stranger and you gave me no welcome, naked and you gave me no clothing, ill and in prison, and you did not care for me.’ Then they will answer and say, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or ill or in prison, and not minister to your needs?’ He will answer them, ‘Amen, I say to you, what you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for me.’ And these will go off to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.” (Matthew 25:31–46)*

What does this mean for us? Christ the King is present to us in the guise of the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the ill and the imprisoned. He is present to us in the guise of those we often consider the “least ones”: the babies still in their mother’s womb, the elderly or suffering who are easily written off as a nuisance, or even worse, as useless human beings who can in the name of mercy be put to death. Lord have mercy on us! The fact is, Jesus teaches us that His kingdom is not only denied to those who without remorse commit sins of commission such as the seven deadly sins: pride, greed, lust, envy, gluttony, wrath and sloth; but also by committing sins of omission by which we neglect our obligation to help others in need. Pope Pius XI explains what it means to have Christ as our king:

“He must reign in our minds, which should assent with perfect submission and firm belief to revealed truths and the doctrines of Christ. He must reign in our wills, which should obey the laws and precepts of God. He must reign in our hearts, which should spurn natural desires and love God above all things, and cleave to him alone. He must reign in our bodies and in our members, which should serve as instruments for the interior sanctification of our souls.” (Encyclical, *Quas primas*, 11).

May Christ the King reign in our hearts, our minds, and our actions!

Your Servant in Christ,  
Fr. Terry Staples