

“Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.”

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Once upon a time, divers located a 400-year-old sunken ship off the coast of Northern Ireland. Among the treasures they found on the ship was a man’s wedding ring. When they cleaned it up, they discovered an inscription on it. Etched on the wide band was a hand holding out a heart, etched with 7 words:

“I have nothing more to give you.”

Of all the treasures found on that sunken ship, none moved the divers more than that ring/inscription.

*The etching on that ring and its inscription **“I have nothing more to give you,”** could well have been placed on the cross, above the head of the crucified Christ! For on the cross, Jesus gave us everything he had: he gave us his love; he gave us his life ...all one person can give to another. Jesus said:*

“No one has greater love than this... to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.” Jn.15:13

*And that brings us to the feast that we celebrate on this final Sunday of the Liturgical Year:
the **Feast of Christ the King.***

*Jesus is not only the “King of the Jews,” as Pilot wrote on the cross, but also the King of Kings. He is the King of Kings for two reasons: **1st**, because of **who** he is and **2nd**, because of **what** he did.*

Now...a brief look at each of these reasons.

1st, Jesus is King of Kings because of **who he is.**

*People sometimes call **gold** the **king of metals**. That’s because gold is popularly thought to be the most precious of all metals. People sometimes call the **lion** the **king of all beasts**. That’s because the lion is popularly thought to be noblest of all animals. Some people call **Benny Goodman** the **king of swing**. That’s because Benny Goodman understood the music of the 1930’s & 40’s better than anyone else. In other words, we use the term **KING** to designate the best there is in a certain field or area. In a similar way, we call Jesus the King... **of the human race**. For Jesus is the best, the noblest human being who ever lived.*

Near the end of his monumental work on the ‘History of the World,’ Arnold Toynbee wrote:

“When we began this work, we found ourselves looking at a great parade of marchers. BUT...as it passed, the marchers all fell, one by one, by the wayside. And now, only one marcher remains, growing larger and larger with each step.” (Paraphrased) *And that marcher is Jesus Christ!*

Still another historian wrote of Jesus Christ:

“There are human pillars that rise towards the sky and bear witness to a nobler destiny. Jesus is the tallest of these pillars. In him is found all that is good and elevated in our human nature.” Ernest Renan

Paul expresses much the same idea in today’s 2nd reading, when he says:

“Christ is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.” He is the King of Kings because of who he is... **“the image of the Invisible God”**...the noblest human who ever lived!

2nd, --**why** Christ is King of Kings... because of **what he did**.

In April 1865, the slain body of Abraham Lincoln lay 'in state' for a few hours in Cleveland, Ohio. It was on its final journey from the nation's capital to Springfield, IL. In the long line of people filing by the body was a poor black woman and her little son. When the two reached the president's body, the woman lifted up her little son and said in a hushed voice:

"Honey, take a long, long look. That... man... died... for you."

What that mother said to her child can be said about Jesus by every mother of every child. Pointing to Christ-crucified, she can say: **"Honey, take a long, long look. That... man... died... for you!"**

This is what we celebrate on this final Vigil/Sunday of the Liturgical Year:

We celebrate the fact that Jesus, the King of Kings, grows larger and larger with each step in the passing parade of history.

*We celebrate the fact that Jesus is King of Kings, not only because of **who he is**: the Son of God... but also because of **what he did**: he died for us; he redeemed us; he reunited us with God, his Father.*

We celebrate the fact that Jesus is the King of Kings because... he gave us everything he had.

"No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends." Jn. 15:13

I close with this prayer:

Lord, it is not enough for us to look at you carrying your cross and to proclaim you to be our king.

It is not enough for us to bow our heads and call you Lord of Lords.

It is not enough for us to praise you on this your feast day.

We must pick up our own cross and follow you.

We must follow you every day of our lives.

We must follow, even to the cross itself, if that be your will.

And, if we do,

you will say to us before we die:

"Amen, I say to you... today... you will be with me in Paradise."

May almighty God, our Abba, bless you—

the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen