

**For The Bulletin Of
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THE FEAST OF CHRIST THE KING

From Father Robert

Stories of kings and queens are often relegated to fairy tales or medieval gallantry. Sometimes, we see modern royalty in the media, and many might remember the wedding of Prince Charles and Princess Diana decades ago, and more recently their son Prince William's wedding to Kate Middleton. But modern royals tend to be figureheads rather than political heads of state. So it can seem a bit odd to celebrate Christ as King. He is certainly more than a figurehead.

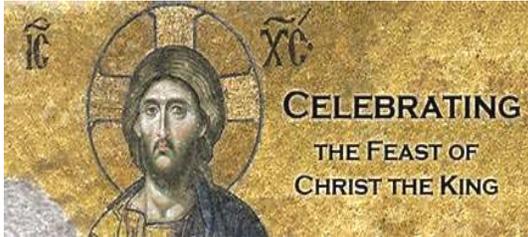
Of course, the image of king is deeply rooted in the ancient world, and not limited to biblical texts. Oftentimes in antiquity the king, or supreme ruler, approached the status of the divine. For example, Julius Caesar's clan was named for Julius, the son of Aeneas (the prince of Troy), who was said to be the son of the goddess Venus. Julius Caesar

received honors of divinity in his lifetime, and after he was assassinated the Roman Senate officially declared him divine. Centuries before, the kings of Judah and Israel were sometimes called divine, or sons of God.

The biblical authors also applied the title of King to God, as Yahweh was the "the great God, the great king over all gods" (psalm 95:3). By the time Jesus was on the scene, the Roman occupation of Judea led the people to long for their own king, to establish the kingdom as independent once again. It's no surprise that the Romans, always on the lookout for those who might attempt insurrection, crucified Jesus as "king of the Jews." The mocking, derisive sign became something the early Christians did not shy away from, but proclaimed. In essence, the early Christians said, Jesus was in fact king, but He was king in a way unforeseen.

The gospel reading for today brings us into the scene between Jesus and Pilate. Of course, we know how it will end, ultimately with the crucifixion and the antagonizing sign proclaiming Jesus, "King." But here in the midst of the conversation we hear eternal questions that cause us to consider, "What is truth?" Jesus makes a straightforward claim, that He is a king, and He has been sent to testify to the truth. Pilate, vested with political authority, including the power to inflict capital punishment, is wrapped up in a semantic argument about the nature of truth. He doesn't see the incarnation of truth, the King of Kings, standing before his very eyes. And in Pilate's blindness, he will put to death Jesus as King of the Jews. So the early Christians, and even us today, continue to proclaim Jesus as

King. He is no mere figurehead. Instead, He shares the title with Yahweh, “Great king over the gods.” What Pilate said in mockery was utterly true. Jesus Christ is King.



Living The Paschal Mystery

The mocking tone of the political authority in calling Jesus “King” seemed to squelch this minor upstart who might have led an insurrection. But Jesus’ followers began to proudly proclaim that mocking title. Jesus was King. But His kingship was of an entirely different kind than that expected by the people. Rather than a military conquest of an occupying force that restored the independence of the Jewish people, Jesus’ kingship involved suffering and death, which then led to resurrection and exaltation. The kingship of Jesus is not one of splendid pageantry. It is not even the sort of medieval gallantry. Instead, He is enthroned in heaven, with our great God Who is king over all gods. As Jesus underwent death before His exaltation, so must we. Our own path to glory, exaltation, and ultimate resurrection comes through a dying to self.

As the Liturgical Year comes to a conclusion, what is your reaction/response to the readings we are hearing today?

- What is the essential “truth” revealed by Jesus in the gospels?

- What are the characteristics and the values of the kingdom of God?
- What does the title “King” help us to understand about Jesus?



About Liturgy: A Paradoxical Faith

Today’s solemnity titled “Christ the King” is filled with paradox. Rather than a superhuman figure ruling with power and might over the cosmos, the gospel reading draws us back to Jesus’ passion with the backdrop of the cross as our King’s throne and the crucifixion, His coronation. This juxtaposition gives liturgical coordinators, homilists, and musicians fair warning that this day is about a different kind of kingship. Any semblance of triumphalism seems very much out of step with the message of this day. As we come to the close of the Liturgical Year with this last Sunday of Ordinary Time, we can certainly celebrate our liturgy as that which praises Christ the King. Yet it is tempered with the understanding that the title of “King” is more closely tied with the sense “governance” that makes one responsible for the care and well-being of others. For us who have been baptized in Christ as “priest, prophet, and king,” we recall that we have been given to one another, to be neighbor and kin to each other and good stewards of the earth. The observance of the Thanksgiving holiday this past Thursday with its themes of giving thanks, family, creation, and abundance can help us

express this more humble sense of stewardship that is the primary role of those who have been crowned as children of God.



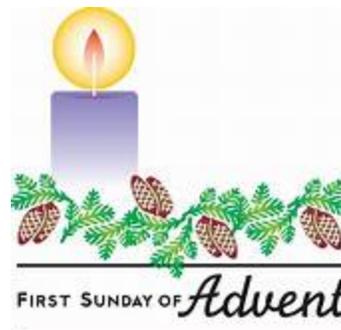
We warmly and lovingly welcome you to liturgy with us today. We know that because of the Thanksgiving holiday, there are more visitors and guests with us and so we extend to each and every one of you a genuine Welcome! We especially want your children who are home for the holidays to know that we welcome them back and that we have not forgotten them!



The Floral Arrangement at the foot of the Cross today is placed to the Glory of God by **John and Sharon Ouimet** in Thanksgiving for the Gift and The Blessing of their Children, Grandchildren, and Family.



You are invited to work with the members of our Art & Environment Committee this Wednesday, November 28th as the environment for liturgy is transformed from Ordinary Time to the beginning of the new Liturgical Year and the Season of Advent. Many hands are needed to help put things away and prepare the environment for Advent. We begin at 9:00 a.m. on that day; coffee and pastries are provided mid-morning, and if we need to go into the afternoon to complete the work, we also provide lunch. This is a wonderful opportunity to exercise your Stewardship of both Time and Talent! Come and meet your fellow parishioners, make new friends, and experience the joy of helping to create a beautiful environment for worship.



Next weekend, December 1st and 2nd we begin a new Liturgical Year with the Season of Advent and its four weeks of preparation for the Feast of Christmas. The sanctuary will be “wrapped” in Royal Purple, the Advent Wreath with its three purple and one Antique Rose candles will be suspended over the Altar, and there will be magnificent

arrangements of fresh evergreens at both the Altar and Ambo as well as fresh Evergreen Wreaths between the Stations of the Cross. We leave the Gospel of Mark behind and begin to read from the Gospel of Luke for this new Year of Grace that will be 2019.



You are invited to join the members of our Filipino Community in the annual celebration of Simbang Gabi, a nine day celebration of Liturgies in preparation for the Christmas Feast. The community will gather each morning at 5:00 a.m. from December 16th through Christmas Eve, December 24th. Following each liturgy, a traditional breakfast will be served in the parish hall. Members of our Filipino Community have taken responsibility to provide volunteers for all the liturgical ministries: Lectors, Eucharistic Ministers, Ushers, Greeters, Musicians, Choir, Cantors as well as Sponsors for the breakfast. At the invitation of **Amante and Gloria Asuncion, Fr. Francis** will be coming from the Philippines to preside and preach for each day's liturgy. All are welcome!

Christmas Environment

You are invited to become a part of a great tradition in our parish of providing the Christmas Environment. Each year our Art & Environment Committee prepares an appropriate and beautiful setting for the Christmas Feast. The wreathes, garlands, lights, trees, panels of cloth at the Icons, the artwork, and the poinsettias all create an environment that says "Christmas!" for the entire Christmas/Epiphany Season. Preparation of the Christmas environment begins at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, December 18th and continues each day of that week until the environment is completely installed. Envelopes to make your contribution have been placed in the monthly envelope pack as well as on the credenza and may be made either In Honor Of or in Loving Memory of a loved one, family member, or friend. Thank you for your generous support that makes our Christmas Environment possible.



Thanksgiving Baskets in our Parish Hall



Our Confirmation Classes moved the baskets to the Parish Hall.

Thank You doesn't begin to express the gratitude we feel to all those who participated in this year's Thanksgiving Basket outreach. The response from our adopted parochial school of St. Peter Martyr, Pittsburg was outstanding: **86 Thanksgiving Baskets!!!** I feel very confident in sharing with you that I believe it is because of how near and dear this outreach was to **Marianne Siino, Secretary and Kindergarten Teacher for almost 40 years**, that the school community responded in such an overwhelming way. What a wonderful way to honor her memory! The total number of baskets donated this year reached a new high of **247!** Our

St. Vincent de Paul Society added a turkey to each basket last Monday morning during the give-a-way. I also want to thank **Steve Rojek and the Students of our Confirmation I and II Classes** who moved ALL the baskets from the church to the parish hall and set them up for distribution last Monday morning. Thank you to all of you for this amazing outpouring of love to families who would not have experienced Thanksgiving had it not been for your thoughtfulness and generosity. I also want to thank our dear friends at Lucky who created the wonderful display that made shopping for the ingredients of the baskets such an easy task.



The Organ Concert

On Friday evening, November 16th, **Don Pearson, Director of Music/Organist/Artist-in-Residence**, played a wonderful concert on our Rodgers Trillium Masterpiece Three Manual and Pedal Pipe/Digital Organ. The program consisted of major works by Boellmann, Bach, Preston, Handel, Copland, Weaver, Yon, Anderson, Alain, Purvis, and Vierne. The concert was recorded by **Gino Ramos** and is available on the parish Facebook page. Don wonderfully demonstrated the capability of our instrument and many of its amazing registrations utilizing the pipework in conjunction with the digital voices. A very appreciative audience

also enjoyed the lovely reception that took place in the parish hall afterward, thanks to **Frances Rojek, Mary Ann Douville, Will and Catherine Avitabile, Erika Fernandes, Terri McNesby and Maryann Peddicord.**



Happy 90th, El Campanil!

Last Saturday evening, November 17th, many parishioners, along with other citizens of Antioch and East Contra Costa came together to celebrate the 90th Anniversary of the El Campanil Theatre. The program was a retrospective of Shows and Stars from its beginning to the present with highlights from “The World of Webber,” The Broadway Divas, You’ve Got A Friend: The Carole King Songbook, This One’s For You: The Songs of Barry Manilow, From Motown with Love, JOEL: The Band, Rhythm Method 4, Wanda Diamond, Frankie G, Mads Tolling, Andrea J. Love, Jim Curry, Nicholas Crossen, with Pianist Kenji Higashihama, and Master of Ceremonies Sean J. O’Neil. It was an outstanding program that honored the work of **Rick Carraher Executive Director** who was responsible for its restoration and working with the Preservation Foundation to sustain its place in the community. And of course, Rick’s wife, **Janis**, was honored as she was behind him and beside him all the way. What a wonderful gift and blessing to have Rick

and Janis and Ricks’ mother with us for worship last Sunday during our 10:00 a.m. Eucharist. They were warmly welcomed and thanked for all they have done for our city and community. If you haven’t attended a concert at the El Campanil, I highly recommend that you do so. The programs are varied, highly entertaining, and the quality of each performance is outstanding. And it all takes place in a magnificently restored historic theatre! What a blessing to have this great venue in our City! Again, congratulations Rick for all you have done and continue to do.



Our parish is blessed and graced with an amazing group of volunteers who do so much to help in the ministry of the parish: To those who come early every Saturday morning to clean and prepare the church and parish hall for the weekend: **Rose Salamanca, Mency Osborne, Carole Miller, Jean Rogers, Al Cosce, Alfred Madoshi, and Jun Bajet.**

...to those who clean and maintain the bathrooms in both the church and parish hall throughout the week: **Steve Rojek, Mary Ewing, Patricia Britton, Harlan Young and Fr. Robert.**

...to **Dilcia Aparicio** who does such an excellent job of washing, ironing, and caring for the Sacred Linens.

...to our Sacristans and Altar Guild who prepare the sanctuary for the celebration of Eucharist each week:

Peter Degl’Innocenti, Pam and Rich Confetti, Vincent Rodriguez, Harlan Young, Monika Kauer, Cynthia Enrique, Nancy Santos and Rose Salamanca.

...to **our counting teams** who are here every week to count the weekly collections.

...to our volunteers who assisted in the parish office last week:

Melodye Costanza, Rowena Cayaban, Yvette Young, Sharon Cissell, Harlan Young, Joe Fanfa and Bev Iacona.

...to our St. Vincent de Paul and Mobile Mall volunteers who transported last week’s donations: **Frank Zamora and Barbara Jackson.**

...to our faithful weekly bulletin assembly team: **Dave Costanza (Lead), Carole Miller, Vangie Parrilla, Belen Farin, Kathy Augusta, Vince Augusta, and Sherry Webb.**

...to our wonderful Parking Lot Security who kept watch over our vehicles during the weekend Liturgies: **Don Benson, Steve Rojek and Dave Simpson.**

Amateur hour at the bishops' conference

Nov 15, 2018

by [Michael Sean Winters](#)

BALTIMORE — I am always glad to attend the bishops' conference meeting in Baltimore every November. I get to witness up close the debates that determine the shape and direction of the church in this country, I can visit with friends and colleagues in the religious press, and the crab cakes are always delicious. This year, the crab was still delicious, and it was good to see friends and colleagues, but what I witnessed was amateur hour at the U.S. bishops' conference.

On Nov. 12, Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, the president of the conference, expressed his disappointment when he announced the Vatican's decision to delay any votes on concrete proposals to confront the clergy sex abuse crisis. At the coffee break, bishops were fuming, complaining that Rome had pulled the rug out from under them. Even those bishops who are most enthusiastic about Pope Francis were distressed, worried that he did not understand the media spotlight under which the bishops were laboring.

But, when the bishops began discussing the proposals on Nov. 13, it quickly became obvious that the proposals were ill-conceived and would have fallen apart on their own, without any help from Rome. Erecting a national oversight commission, at considerable expense and with additional bureaucracy, to monitor 200 bishops, very few of them likely to have broken their vows of celibacy, didn't seem very practical once they began discussing it. The proposed commission would report allegations to the nuncio, but that happens now, and no one had bothered to ask the nuncio if he wanted a commission to help him in his work. The Standards of Conduct seemed poorly framed and vague. The whole thing seemed amateurish.

I understand the need for the laity to be involved. But, even this seemed botched. I want the bishops to go deeper than simply fixing norms to monitor sex abuse. The cover-up of the abuse is a symptom of a clerical culture that was erected in the 16th century to address key problems and which has outlived its healthy years. But, just as the reformers at the Council of Trent did not pay somebody else to do their work, the

bishops today can't outsource the conversion that is needed to make that culture healthy. They must do the work, too.

It was kind of funny to see both a liberal reform group and a conservative commentator urge the bishops to dress differently, as if that would not be dismissed — rightly — as a silly PR stunt at best and a fraudulent attempt at genuine conversion at worst.

There was a lot of anger directed at former Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, along with justifiable outrage that someone who lived a double life for so long and whose alleged depredations went on for so long, could have risen so high in the hierarchy. But, frankly, looking around the room, almost everywhere you looked, you saw evidence of the often lousy appointments to the episcopate that stalked the reigns of Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI. McCarrick may have preyed on seminarians, but San Francisco Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone preyed on some people's homophobia in calling attention to a study — I use the term loosely — by Fr. Paul Sullins, who used to teach at Catholic University of America, that claimed to demonstrate a link between homosexuality in the clergy and clergy sex abuse. The study is bunk.

Previously, I had only heard Sullins distort Catholic social teaching, but apparently he is willing to cherry pick data to make a tendentious sociological case — and construct an easy scapegoat. Cordileone bought it.

McCarrick may have lived a double life, but what to make of the crimped piety of Bishop Joseph Strickland of Tyler,

Texas, who spoke movingly about the vocation of a Christian bishop before waltzing over to a rally being held by hate-filled Michael Voris and Church Militant where guests were greeted by signs calling on all homosexual clergy to resign and touting Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò as a "hero." Strickland should be able to smell the venomous hatred coming from that crowd of anti-gay bigots.

My old friend from seminary, Bishop Michael Olson of Fort Worth, Texas, spoke with emotion in his voice as he called out his brother bishops for not even disinviting McCarrick from future meetings. McCarrick is, on the pope's orders, living in a monastery far, far away. But, Bishop Robert Finn, formerly of the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph, was sitting right there. The allegations against McCarrick have not been proven in a court of law nor in an ecclesial trial, but Finn was convicted of a misdemeanor. Why was Olson so keen to attack McCarrick and not Finn? I was glad Olson called on the body to repudiate Viganò's call for the pope to resign, but why not repudiate the whole "testimony"?

DiNardo should resign as president of the conference. There was no leadership on display before the meeting nor at it. In 2002, at Dallas, Atlanta Archbishop Wilton Gregory was the president of the conference and he worked the room, consulting with his brother bishops extensively. Gregory is a born leader who tirelessly explained what was going on to the press corps whose job it was to communicate the Dallas decisions to the world. DiNardo did not even show up at the press conference on Nov. 14 to take questions, and there are plenty we had for him.

The prelate who came closest to putting his finger on the problem was Cardinal Joseph Tobin of Newark, New Jersey. On Nov. 13, he said that he had experienced the sense that the bishops have lost their credibility, in his own ministry and from listening to his brother bishops, and that a question came to him while he was waiting to speak. As bad as the events of the summer of shame were, what was there before if their credibility could be lost so quickly?

I think this is the question the pope wants them to ask: Whence your credibility as a bishop? I think the Holy Father knows that there will always be sickos and perverts, but what turned isolated instances of horrific behavior into a crisis was the clerical culture that sought to protect itself rather than to protect children, that worried about scandal more than harming children. That is what has to change. There will always be some priests and some teachers and some Boy Scout leaders who try and sexually abuse a child. The question is how should ministers of the Gospel respond? And, while there will always be some ministers who are clueless or nasty, how could a culture form that such patterns of evil behavior covering up the crimes of the perpetrators were so widespread?

Here, as well, Pope Francis is going to have to step up to the plate and explain the behavior of his predecessor, St. Pope John Paul II. He set the patterns that became the rule by refusing to meet with victims and denying the allegations unheard. He made it near to impossible to laicize criminal pedophiles, and he, not to put too fine a point on it, promoted McCarrick not once, not twice, but three times. John Paul was a mystical and holy man, and I do not

doubt his aides kept important information from him. Holy he was, but "the Great"? When he was not capable of seeing past his aides' obfuscation? And if McCarrick had to surrender his red hat, surely there are two other red hats that should be retired, those belonging to Italian Cardinal Angelo Sodano and Polish Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz, the former Secretary of State and personal secretary to John Paul II, respectively. They knew. They had to know. And not just about McCarrick.

In a few short months, the presidents of the world's bishops' conferences will converge on the Vatican to discuss the issue of clergy sex abuse. The Holy Father has a few short months to prepare a meeting of singular consequence. He must consult with bishops who not only understand the problem but can exercise some competence and wisdom in devising proposals to confront it.

By then, the U.S. bishops will have had their retreat and we will see what effect that has. I suspect for some of them, the ones who believe they have already solved all the riddles of revelation and for whom the reduction of religion to ethics, thence to legalisms and finally to politics is complete, for them, they really will need to fall off a horse before they get it.

Far be it from me to presume. Perhaps the Holy Spirit will inspire them to conversion in new and profound ways. We can hope. Indeed, at the conclusion of the bishops' meeting in Baltimore, hope was really the only thing we have to hold on to. Maybe that is the lesson the pope wanted us all to learn.

[Michael Sean Winters covers the nexus of religion and politics for NCR.]