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Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe (with audio)

A homily by Saint Josemaria published in "Christ is Passing By," given on the feast of Christ the King, November 22, 1970. A new downloadable audio version of the homily is available.

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Christ's lordship over the universe is commemorated in various ways in

feasts of the liturgical year, including the Epiphany, Easter, and the Ascension. With the Solemnity of Christ the King, instituted by Pope Pius XI in 1925 in the context of the growing secularization of the world, the Church wishes to highlight even more clearly Christ's sovereignty over all creation, including human history.

Jesus' reign, as the liturgy of the Mass underlines, is a *regnum veritatis et vitae; regnum sanctitatis et gratiae; regnum iustitiae, amoris et pacis.*^[1] Truth, life, holiness, grace, justice, love and peace: these are the values that the human heart most longs for, and we Christians can contribute to bringing them about. We can do so especially through works of mercy done for the most needy, as the gospel for this feast in Year A tells us. *For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me*

drink, I was a stranger and you made me welcome.[2]

Nevertheless, Jesus himself warned us, *my kingdom is not of this world.* [3] His sovereignty will be seen in its fullness at his second coming in glory, when there will be new heavens and a new earth, and all creatures, *free from the slavery of sin, will serve and never cease to praise him.*[4] Now is the time of expectation, of working for his kingdom, confident that the final victory will be his.

Jesus is the center of history: not only the history of mankind as a whole, but also of each individual person. Even when it seems that everything is lost, it is always possible to appeal to our Lord like the good thief, as the gospel for Year C tells us.[5] What peace comes from the fact that, in spite of our past, with sincere repentance we can always enter the

Kingdom of God. “Today we can think about our own story, the path of our life. Each one of us has our history; we each have our mistakes, our sins, our happy moments and our sad ones. On a day such as this we do well to think about our own history, and to look at Jesus, and to say often, but from the heart, in silence, each one of us: ‘Remember me, Lord, now that you are in your kingdom. Jesus, remember me, because I want to be good, I want to be good, but I don’t have the strength, I just can’t. I’m a sinner, a sinner. But remember me, Jesus. You can remember me because you’re in the center, you’re right there, in your kingdom’.”[6]

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"Our strength lies in prayer" (Letter of Blessed Alvaro on the consecration of Opus Dei to the Most Sacred and Merciful Heart of Jesus on the feast of Christ the King)

[1] Roman Missal, Preface for the feast of Christ the King.

[2] *Mt* 25:35.

[3] *Jn* 18:36.

[4] Roman Missal, Mass of Christ the King, Collect.

[5] Cf. *Lk* 23:35-43.

[6] Pope Francis, Homily, 24 November 2013.

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