

Feast of Christ the King

Cycle C-2025

The Feast of Christ the King got me thinking about the infamous ship called the Titanic. The mastermind behind it once boasted, “Not even God could sink this ship.” In the movie Titanic, Leonardo Decaprio, who plays the character of Jack Dawson, stands on the bow of the ill-fated ship, raises his hands to the heavens, and yells, “I am king of the world.” We all saw how that worked out for the two of them. Just saying. Christ the King is the only unsinkable Person or Reality that has ever existed. Nonetheless, humility leads us to recognize that these sentiments are not unique to the two of them. We can all relate to this type of declaration. Within the human heart, there is a strong desire to be the king or queen of our own little world. We tend to govern our own lives according to our own personal needs for power, control, success, human esteem, self-interest, or self-preservation. These needs vary from person to person. Did you realize that as a people of faith, whenever we seek to be the king or queen of our own personal world, we are living like practical atheists? A practical atheist is

someone who believes in God but does not allow it to make a practical difference in their daily belief system, morality, decision making, lifestyle, or relationship with God, others, or self. Practically speaking, we live as though God doesn't exist or that he is dead to us. This can be true even if we faithfully attend Mass every Sunday. It is how we "live" and "love" throughout the week that reveals the degree to which we allow Jesus to be the King of our hearts. Our love for Christ is meant to embrace every dimension of our lives: our prayer and worship, our faith and morality, our relationships and service, our work and entertainment, our joys and suffering. We can be a practical atheist across the board or just in certain areas of our lives, where we want to reign supreme. What are the areas of our lives in which we are practical atheists, if any at all? In other words, what are those areas where we put a sign on the door of our hearts telling Jesus Christ, "Do Not Disturb?"

Whenever we choose to remain the king or queen of our own little world, despite God's ongoing promptings, revelations, epiphanies, and interventions, we will eventually go down like the Titanic. Like the Titanic, it can happen dramatically and tragically, all at one time. Most of the time, we gradually sink as we are eventually

swept under by the powerful waves and undercurrents of emptiness, heartache, bitterness, hopelessness, or a crisis of meaning. These states of mind and soul pull us under if we do not habitually allow Jesus Christ to make a practical difference in our daily existence. As St. Augustine so prophetically reminds us: “Our hearts were made for You O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in You.” Truer words have never been spoken. They are applicable to us both in life and in death.

The Feast of Christ the King is meant to be a joyful and loving reminder that Jesus is the King of our personal world, and the King of the whole world. As we let go of the reigns of our lives, and begin to embrace an ongoing partnership with Christ, we can gradually rise above the waves and live into a new world that is much more liberating, satisfying, purposeful, empowering, inspirational, and salvific, on both a personal and soul level.

Did you know that as a Christian people, we are called to become Kingdom builders, alongside Christ the King? We are called to actively collaborate with Jesus in building the Kingdom of God on earth. Our personal motto is meant to be that which we pray in the “Our Father:” “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth, as it is in

heaven.” In the Gospel of John, Jesus reveals that His Kingdom is not of this world. It is not of this world because the foundational worldview and virtues of the Kingdom of God and those of the Kingdom of the secular world, tend to be quite different in fundamental ways. Even if they happen to use similar words or terminology, they often possess a different meaning, intention, or goal behind it. Some key buzzwords for the worldview and virtues of the Kingdom of God include: faith, hope, and love; grace and mercy; peace and justice; humility and truth; holiness and conversion of life; service and self-sacrifice; perseverance and faithfulness.

In building the Kingdom of God on earth, it is essential that we stay deeply rooted in Christ the King, who has gone before us and seeks to gather us into His heavenly Kingdom. We do this through an ever-deepening relationship with Jesus, based on love and trust, that comes through prayer and spiritual awareness. Leo Sayer powerfully captures this relational dynamic in his song, “When I Need You:” “When I need you, I just close my eyes and I’m with you, and all that I so wanna give you, is only a heartbeat away. When I need love, I hold out my hand and I touch love. I never knew there was so much love, keeping me warm night and day.” By

continually raising our minds and hearts to Christ the King, we reach out and touch His love, grace, and mercy, which “keeps warming our souls, night and day. Through this relational intimacy, our identity and mission to build the Kingdom of God on earth is renewed and strengthened.

C.S. Lewis wisely encourages us “Not to be so heavenly minded, that we are no earthly good.” Christianity is not meant to be an ivory tower or spectator experience. It is not meant to be primarily an academic or ritual exercise. Christianity is above all, a way of seeing, believing, living, and relating, to God, others, ourselves, and all of creation. Our relationship with Christ the King is meant to become flesh in daily, concrete actions of love and service, and by living out and sharing the teachings and principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and our Catholic Christian faith. Equally, we don’t want to be so earthly minded that we are no heavenly good. This happens when we become blind to the spiritual and eternal meaning and significance of our daily choices and overall existence. It also occurs when we become indifferent to how we are called to assist others in working out their own eternal salvation through our prayers, words, actions, and personal witness.

By living generously and faithfully for the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, He blesses and transforms the world by making it more like heaven and more like Him. Jesus Christ is heaven in the flesh. We also prepare ourselves to ascend into His Heavenly Kingdom, where we will experience the ultimate joy of living and serving with Jesus Christ the King, forever and forever. Amen.