

## **HOMILY for the FEAST of CHRIST THE KING – Year B**

This Sunday's Feast is Christ the King. Reflecting on it, I'm reminded of this cute story I'd like to share with you.

A farmer was out working in his field one day when a carload of politicians came flying by. They were going too fast for the curve and turned over the ditch. Later the Sheriff stopped by & asked the farmer if he has seen the car.

"Yep," replied the farmer. "Where are they?" asked the Sheriff.

"Over there," replied the farmer pointing to the ditch filled with fresh dirt.

"You buried them?" asked the Sheriff, "Were they still alive?"

Replied the farmer, "They said they were, but you know how those people lie!"

Anyway, this Sunday the Church calls us to celebrate the Feast of Christ the King as we close out another Liturgical & Calendar Year. One of the reasons for us to cap the year-end with this feast is because Jesus Christ is the Alpha & the Omega, the beginning & the end of everything. Besides, we believe that Jesus will return at the end of time to be the Judge of the living & the dead. For He is truly the King of the Universe.

In our lives, there are some people that we admire & look up to. Some of them might be our family members while others could be our church leaders/religious folks or, school staff. Their personalities or ways of life might have inspired us & challenged us to follow in their footsteps. They knew that our world is full of daily challenges & temptations. They wanted to help us overcome our own weaknesses & be a better person every day. They called us to follow a life of virtues & service to our communities. For that way of life will bring us true peace & happiness. These folks are honored to be the role models & motivating examples for us in the modern world. We are blessed to have them in our lives; & we certainly need more people like them in our world. I do not know if you have ever wondered why our world has become so violent & mean as we see it now. I believe it is because it has not had enough good role models for its citizens to look up to & imitate in their daily lives. If it has, we would have a much more peaceful & loving world, instead of the current one.

For us Christians, we have been blessed with a great role model in Jesus who has a virtuous personality & good Christian way of life. His personality is full of great virtues while His way of life brings God's love & peace to not only Himself but also everyone around Him. That is why people back then constantly looked for Him to experience God's love & peace at all times. They also wanted to be near Him to be blessed with miracles of healing & nourishing in their lives. He also had wonderful teachings & Good News such as the Beatitudes that would lift up their spirit & bring them hope & comfort. He showed them lots of wonderful virtues such as compassion & generosity as He reached out to heal people with all sorts of afflictions even on the Sabbath Day. His Christian way of life surely built up community & helped everyone to be kind & generous to one another. He put an end to division & a life of sins & darkness. That is why we need to look up to Jesus as our role model & Christian way of life. We cannot find a great example of good Christian living in our political & even some Church leaders. Their personalities & daily ways of life often do not follow our Christian teachings or witness well our Christian virtues. They usually let us down by the way they live, or how they treat other human beings. Jesus, on the other hand, would never disappoint us & would be a great role model for

us in the modern world. We can follow His example of good Christian living by following a life of virtues & service like He did.

Besides being a good role model for us, Jesus would be an extraordinary leader in our modern world. We Christians sure need someone to show us the way in this confusing world & protect us from the power of darkness. Unfortunately, most of our leaders put their wellbeing benefits before the needs of the people they serve. They would not make any personal sacrifices & put the common good before their own interests. They would not stand up for the poor & the lowly. For these folks do not benefit them & advance their ambition. That is why we have seen so much corruption committed by our leaders. If there are a couple of important qualities that our leaders should have, those would be integrity & service. A person of integrity would know right from wrong & be committed to do only the right things despite their personal costs. This person will not be easily influenced & corrupted by worldly things. Meanwhile, a person of service will help prevent a typical from corruption & keep him/her on the right path at all times. This Sunday's Gospel gives us a good comparison between an extraordinary leader like Jesus and a typical one like Pontius Pilate as following: "Pilate said to Jesus, 'Are you the King of the Jews?' Jesus answered, 'Do you say this on your own or have others told you about me?'...Pilate said to Him, 'Then you are a king?' Jesus answered, 'You say I am a King. For this I was born & for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.'"

As you can see from above, what distinguishes Jesus from a typical leader, besides His integrity & desire of service to the community, is His respect for the truth. He always spoke the truth even though it might rub the public the wrong way & cost Him His popularity, or affect His future plans. He called on His followers to embrace the truth because according to Him, "the truth will set them free." Unfortunately, many of our leaders do not speak the truth, or respect the truth. They lied, cheated, & encouraged their followers & the public to do the same. No wonder why our world is full of darkness & violence compared to the joyful & peaceful world of Heaven. That is one of the consequences of not respecting the truth & living a life of truth. In addition to loving the truth, Jesus was also willing to sacrifice His life for our salvation, an exceptional quality that we cannot find in a typical leader. In fact, most of our leaders would view their people like pawns & gladly sacrifice them for their own benefits. Surely Jesus would not do that. We just need to look up to the Cross & see for ourselves what an exceptional leader He is. This Sunday's Second Reading affirms that personal quality of Jesus as following, "Jesus Christ is the faithful witness, the first born of the dead & ruler of the Kings of the earth. To Him who loves us & freed us from our sins by His own blood, who has made us into a Kingdom."

My dear brothers & sisters, we all need a role model to look up to & find inspiration for our faith journey in the modern world. We also want to have a leader who would value the truth & show us the way to true peace & happiness. Furthermore, this leader would put the common good before his/her own benefits & be willing to sacrifice himself/herself for his/her people. Unfortunately, most of our leaders have been preoccupied with their own benefits & ambition & ignored the plight of their people. They have also set a horrible role model for their people. This Sunday we are reminded of someone like Jesus who would be an exceptional leader for us as we begin a new Liturgical & Calendar Year. For He has a virtuous personality & great desire of service for the common good. If you have not had an exceptional leader & a

good role model for your life yet, let me recommend Jesus to be that person for you. He will never disappoint you or abandon you in times of need.