

Christ the King opens the way to a wonderful garden



Gospel reflection for the Feast of Christ the King

Is it obsolete, this feast of Christ, the King of the universe? We live at a time when populists present themselves as enlightened monarchs and liberal-libertarian democracies promise us a life in which everyone is their own king. We are alone at the controls of our lives, acting according to our desires and impulses, they say, but in fact this celebration reminds us that all authority is received and must be lived as a service to all, especially the smallest. It also sounds like a cry of victory: through his cross, Christ definitively defeated evil and made us live by His grace.

Meditate

The people are standing there and watching. I, too, am there at the foot of the cross, turning my gaze to this disfigured, humiliated man who seems to have lost everything. It's the failure of a lifetime. A panel crowns him "The King of the Jews — but what kind of king are you, poor and abandoned by all?" I look, and I listen. I hear the snickering of leaders, soldiers, and even of a criminal, crucified at his side -- "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us as well."

Already three times, Satan had tempted Jesus in the desert, at the beginning of his public ministry, playing on his identity as Son: "If you are the Son of God ... "So to be king, would it be a way of being a son, of receiving oneself entirely from the Father as a beloved Son? Three times Jesus had answered, opposing the word of God to the tempter. Only his word is trustworthy. Because God doesn't lie. Here, Jesus remains silent. It is to the Father that he reserves his last words: "Father, into your hands, I commend my spirit. Father, forgive them, they don't know what they're doing. " At the heart of his weakness, when everything in him could revolt, Jesus chose to trust and entrusted himself totally to the Father. By asking forgiveness for his executioners, he opens the door for us shut out by our complacency and sin. In Jesus, the source is liberated, trust with the Father restored, our identity as sons and daughters of the Kingdom revealed. In Christ, the world is reconciled, definitively. The omnipotence of this King restores us to ourselves at the same time as it connects us to the Father, making us participants in His life. The only one to have understood it that day was a criminal who opened himself both to the depth of his sin and to divine mercy, saying: "Jesus, remember me when you come to your Kingdom." His reply is deeply fulfilling; there is more joy in heaven for a single sinner who converts than for 99 others who do not need salvation: "Amen," Christ replies. "I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise." Christ the King thus opens the doors of the wonderful garden to us. He is the new Adam, the perfect image and likeness of the Father. In him is reflected the face of the Father but also the call to let ourselves be transfigured by him, to receive ourselves in our turn as beloved sons.

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