

## Christ the King - Nov 25, 2018

“As Christ was anointed priest, prophet, and king, so may you live always as a member of his body sharing everlasting life.” You may not, perhaps probably not, remember where those words come from. If you were baptized after 1972 or so or if you had children baptized after that year. Those words were spoken while the priest anointed the child with Chrism, a sacred oil blessed by the bishop each year. If you were baptized prior to that, similar words were used while the anointing took place. That Chrism or sacred oil is used at three times in the life of a Catholic: Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders. At each of those moments a person is taking on a new level of responsibility in building up the kingdom of God.

Today, we celebrate Christ as King. We heard Pilate ask Jesus: “Are you the King of the Jews?” Part of Jesus’ answer: “My kingdom does not belong to this world...My kingdom is not here.” The whole dialogue between Jesus and Pilate is a kind of shooting match of words that can leave us puzzled and Pilate dumbfounded.

We have this feast recognizing Jesus as King. But his kingdom is different from other kinds of kingdoms. Daniel, in the first reading, speaks these words: “I saw one like a Son of man receiving dominion, glory, and kingship...his dominion is an everlasting dominion.” John in the second reading says: “Jesus Christ is the ruler of the kings of the earth.”

We associate kings with power and authority, reverence and respect. We believers readily admit that Christ is our King and that we want to belong to his kingdom. Likewise, we readily speak about the kingdom of heaven. But, does that mean that we have to wait until we die before we can experience the kingdom?

True, Christ’s kingdom is a spiritual kingdom. However, and this is a big “however,” just because it is spiritual, it does not have to be invisible. Some would want us to relegate our kingdom in such a way that it is invisible. The spirituality of the Kingdom of Christ means that it is rooted in each single person who has been baptized. Our baptism should form our personalities. Baptism is not just a ritual so that there can be a family gathering and party afterwards. In our baptism, we become rooted in Christ, and Christ becomes rooted in us.

Rooted does not mean hidden or out of the way. Rooted means that Christ is the foundation of our lives to be lived, with all beliefs, values, structures, and standards, in the public forum. To relegate any of these to

the back burner or to say that these values are exercised only when convenient ends up with our values being suppressed, minimized, compromised and, in the end, not part who we should be.

It is very simple. The Kingdom of God, established by Jesus in his lifetime, must be completed by us in our lifetime. So, the question for us is how well have we lived out what I said at the beginning: As Christ was anointed priest, prophet and king so may you live always as a member of his body sharing everlasting life. We have been given the gift of eternal life. Remember that a gift is not a gift until it is given away!