ENTRANCE ANTIPHON
**How worthy is the Lamb who was slain,
to receive power and divinity,
and wisdom and strength and honour.
To him belong glory and power for ever and ever.**

GLORIA
**Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.**

**We praise you,
we bless you,
we adore you,
we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.**

**For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.**

COLLECT
Almighty ever-living God,
whose will is to restore all things
in your beloved Son, the King of the universe,
grant, we pray,
that the whole creation, set free from slavery,
may render your majesty service
and ceaselessly proclaim your praise.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

FIRST READING — Ez 34:11-12,15-17
A reading from the prophet Ezekiel

The Lord says this: I am going to look after my flock myself and keep
all of it in view. As a shepherd keeps all his flock in view when he
stands up in the middle of his scattered sheep, so shall I keep my sheep in view.
I shall rescue them from wherever they have been
scattered during the mist and darkness. I myself will pasture my sheep,
I myself will show them where to rest – it is the Lord who speaks.
I shall look for the lost one, bring back the stray, bandage the wounded and make the weak strong.
I shall watch over the fat and healthy. I shall be a true shepherd to them.
As for you, my sheep, the Lord says this:
I will judge between sheep and sheep, between rams and he-goats.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM — Ps 22:1-3,5-6
Response:
The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

1. The Lord is my shepherd;
there is nothing I shall want.
Fresh and green are the pastures
where he gives me repose. **(R.)**
2. Near restful waters he leads me,
to revive my drooping spirit.
He guides me along the right path;
he is true to his name. **(R.)**
3. You have prepared a banquet for me
in the sight of my foes.
My head you have anointed with oil;
my cup is overflowing. **(R.)**
4. Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me
all the days of my life.
In the Lord's own house shall I dwell
for ever and ever. **(R.)**

SECOND READING — 1 Cor 15:20-26,28
A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians

Christ has been raised from the dead, the first-fruits of all who have fallen asleep. Death came through one man and in the same way the resurrection of the dead has come through one man. Just as all men die in Adam, so all men will be brought to life in Christ; but all of them in their proper order: Christ as the first-fruits and then, after the coming of Christ, those who belong to him. After that will come the end, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father, having done away with every sovereignty, authority and power. For he must be king until he has put all his enemies under his feet and the last of the enemies to be destroyed is death. And when everything is subjected to him, then the Son himself will be subject in his turn to the One who subjected all things to him, so that God may be all in all.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION
**Alleluia, alleluia!
Blessings on him who comes in the name of the Lord!
Blessings on the coming kingdom of our father David!
Alleluia!**

GOSPEL — Mt 25:31-46
A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Jesus said to his disciples: 'When the Son of Man comes in his glory, escorted by all the angels, then he will take his seat on his throne of glory. All the nations will be assembled before him and he will separate men one from another as the shepherd separates sheep from goats. He will place the sheep on his right hand and the goats on his left.

'Then the King will say to those on his right hand, "Come, you whom my Father has blessed, take for your heritage the kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world. 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; naked and you clothed me, sick and you visited me, in prison and you came to see me." Then the virtuous will say to him in reply, "Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you; or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and make you welcome; naked and clothe you; sick or in prison and go to see you?" And the King will answer, "I tell you solemnly, in so far as you did this to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me."

'Next he will say to those on his left hand, "Go away from me, with your curse upon you, to the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you never gave me food; I was thirsty and you never gave me anything to drink; I was a stranger and you never made me welcome, naked and you never clothed me, sick and in prison and you never visited me." Then it will be their turn to ask, "Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty, a stranger or naked, sick or in prison, and did not come to your help?" Then he will answer, "I tell you solemnly, in so far as you neglected to do this to one of the least of these, you neglected to do it to me."

'And they will go away to eternal punishment, and the virtuous to eternal life.'

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PROFESSION OF FAITH
**I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,**
(all bow during the next two lines)
**who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting.
Amen.**

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS
As we offer you, O Lord, the sacrifice
by which the human race is reconciled to you,
we humbly pray,
that your Son himself may bestow on all nations
the gifts of unity and peace.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON
**The Lord sits as King for ever.
The Lord will bless his people with peace.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION
Having received the food of immortality,
we ask, O Lord,
that, glorying in obedience
to the commands of Christ, the King of the universe,
we may live with him eternally in his heavenly Kingdom.
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.
Amen.

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Redemptorist Communications

Sunday Message

THE WORD



JUDGEMENT DAY
MT 25:31-46

Today we celebrate the feast of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, which always falls on the last Sunday of the liturgical year. The Gospel begins with a majestic scene describing the return of the Son of Man in glory. Jesus will end his earthly life in the humiliation of the passion and crucifixion.

He will depart from this world unobtrusively, saying farewell to his own in the obscurity of a hillside in Galilee. But his return will be glorious, as he comes escorted by the angels to take his seat for judgment. Before him have gathered all the nations. Like a shepherd at day's end, he separates sheep from goats. He addresses both of them. The speeches are substantially the same. What differs is their reaction.

The first group consists of the sheep. His message to them is positive: they are blessed by the Father; a place has been prepared for them in God's kingdom since the foundation of the world. They have passed six vital tests: they have fed the king when he was hungry, given him drink when he was thirsty, welcomed him when he was a stranger, clothed him when he was naked, and visited him when he was sick and in prison. This comes as a surprise to the sheep. They have no memory of ever having served the king in any of these ways. He tells them that as long as they did it to the most vulnerable of his brothers and sisters, they did it to him.

Next, he addresses those on the left. He applies the same test to them, but they fail it. Again, they are taken aback: they have never seen the king in any kind of need. They are told that when they failed to care for their weak brothers and sisters, they failed to care for the king. The scene ends with the groups going their separate ways – the goats to eternal punishment and the just to eternal life.

The meaning is clear. The parables of the end times have spoken about the need to be ready for the coming of the Son of Man. It is now unmistakable what that readiness entails. Jesus began his teaching by proclaiming beatitudes that would mark out his disciples. He ends his teaching with a set of six works of mercy that are a perfect match for the beatitudes. Matthew is a practical teacher. He wants to leave his readers in no doubt about what following Jesus demands. ■

PRAY
Pope Francis said today's Gospel can be summed up in one golden rule: "In everything, do to others as you would have them do to you." Pray that you will live by this golden rule.

SAY
"Lord, help me to see you especially in those in greatest need. Give me a big heart. Amen."

REFLECT
Leaving the prison on the Thursday before he died, Pope Francis said that whenever he visits such a place, he asks himself, why them and not me? He always tried to put himself in other people's shoes.

It explained his concern for the poor and for migrants: "The only proper attitude is to stand in the shoes of those brothers and sisters of ours who risk their lives to offer a future to their children," he said. "Can we not realise that this is exactly what Jesus demands of us when he tells us that in welcoming the stranger we welcome him?"

Why them and not me? The Christian is one who stands in the other person's shoes. This attitude is what separates the sheep from the goats. It is the basis on which we will be judged.

St John of the Cross summed up the judgment scene quite simply: "In the evening of life, we shall be judged on love." ■

DO
Try to see the face of Christ in every person you meet.

LEARN
Pope Pius XI inaugurated this feast in 1925, during a period of increasing political turmoil. Mussolini was in power in Italy. Hitler was building up the Nazi Party in Germany. Stalin was consolidating his position in the Soviet Union. Democracies were crumbling across Europe, and populism, militant nationalism and antisemitism were on the rise. Pope Pius was declaring to the world that, despite dictatorships and false values, Jesus Christ remained King of the Universe and a model for how authority should be exercised.
Sadly, Pius XI could have created this feast for the world of today. There is so much fear and anxiety about, with conflict in so many lands, increased political polarisation and intolerance, national leaders who abuse their position and treat their opponents with contempt, a world more fraught now than at any time since the end of the Cold War.
Christ the King is the model for how power and authority should be exercised, now and always, and the model for how we should relate to one another. He shows us the true meaning of leadership.