

Christ the King C 2016

The End of the Year of God's Grace

Today, on this feast of Christ the King, we come to the end of the church's liturgical year, a year of grace during which we have heard and participated in the story of our salvation. This story of salvation began last Advent when we waited and hoped for the coming of Christ in Christmas mystery and at the end of the ages. It continued during the Christmas season when we celebrated the mystery of the eternal Word of God that became made flesh in Jesus Christ. During Lent, we renewed and reformed our lives so that we could celebrate the Paschal Mystery of Christ's death and resurrection. And during the season of Easter, we celebrated that mystery for fifty days so that we might walk in the newness of life that Jesus Christ has given us. Finally, throughout this year we have been mediating and reflecting on the life and ministry of Jesus as told in the Gospel of Saint Luke.

But during this liturgical year we have done more than remember the past; we have *participated* in the saving events of our salvation. Again and again, we have entered into the mystery of the Lord's death and resurrection. We have been renewed by the power of God's Spirit. We have experienced what St. Paul's calls the newness of life that comes from the Spirit of the risen Lord. We have been bathed in the waters of God's grace, love and mercy.

The feast that we celebrate today tells us the end of the story of our salvation. It assures us that at the end of the ages, when all is revealed, Jesus Christ will be king. Jesus Christ will rule over our lives and over the world in which we live. To be sure, it doesn't seem that way now, and it is often difficult to see how God will be victorious. The worries and anxieties of life consume our lives. Will I be laid off? Will I get my job back? What is happening to my children? What is happening to my aged parents? How am I going to cope with the demands being made upon me every day? It is hard to believe that Jesus Christ will rule at the end of the ages. The violence and destruction in our world seems to grow greater, and natural disasters continue to afflict innocent people. We may even wonder in the silence of our hearts who will be victorious at the end of the ages: the power of evil or the grace of God. Jesus Christ or Satan?

The answer to this question is found in this feast we celebrate today. If we believe, there is no doubt that God and only God will have the last word, the only word that matters, the Word that is Jesus Christ. We know the end of the story. We know that in God's good time, all will be well. How this will happen, we do not know. When this will happen, we do not know. That this will happen, we are confident because we believe in Jesus Christ. What a difference Christ makes in our lives. Because we know the end of the story we can live with confidence and

hope in the midst of fear and anxiety. Because we know that Jesus Christ will rule at the end of the ages, we know that all will be well.