

The Solemnity of Christ the King: A

(Homily by Fr. Alphonse Gollapalli)

In the last Thursday Mass in the Blessed Sacrament School, a couple from our parish, Jorge and Ann Vazquez were declared as this year's Mardi Gras king and queen. They were crowned with golden crowns. Every kid in the school garlanded them with colorful mardi gras lays. The concept of a king and queen was brought home to them. All the kids jumped for joy and hugged the new king and queen.

The kings and kingdoms are a history. "Kings are the slaves of history," says Leo Tolstoy in his book, "War and Kings."

The people of Israel had their first king in Saul. The royal kingship in Israel lasted only for a few hundred years. They didn't necessarily have good experience of their kings. Prophet Samuel warned, "A king will take your sons and assign them to his chariots and horses, and they will run before his chariot. He will appoint from among them his commanders of thousands and of hundreds. He will make them do his plowing and harvesting and produce his weapons of war and chariotry. He will use your daughters as perfumers, cooks, and bakers. He will take your best fields, vineyards, and olive groves, and give them to his servants. He will tithe your crops and grape harvests to give to his officials and his servants. He will take your male and female slaves, as well as your best oxen and donkeys, and use them to do his work. He will also tithe your flocks. As for you, you will become his slaves," (1Sam 8/10-18). The history tells us that it was true for Israel and it was true for the whole world.

The tendency and necessity for a leader has been part of all civilizations. The terms may differ in what we call them such as kings, presidents, prime ministers, etc. But without a leader, a society is a divided one. The Dictionary.com mentions under definition for the word king as, "God or Christ." Though kingdoms came and went, the Kingdom of God reigns forever. Jesus asserted that he is King and his kingdom is not of this world. His kingship is very different from what the world knows. Observe today's scriptures of what God or Christ is all about as King. He is:

Shepherd King: " He will pasture his sheep; He will give them rest; He will seek out the lost, He will bring back the strayed, He will bind up the injured; He will heal the sick.

Destroys Death: When he hands over the kingdom to his God and Father, He will destroy every kingdom and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. He destroyed his own death through his resurrection. He will destroy our death by raising up on the last day.

Final Judge: He will place the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. Then the king will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

A Hungry King: He is hungry and asks if you can feed him; (*you can feed him by the hungry multitude that needs food around the world.*)

A Thirsty King: He is thirsty and asks if you can give him a drink; (*you can quench his thirst by helping preserve and supply pure drinking water for millions of thirsty around the world.*)

A Stranger King: He is a stranger and asks if you can welcome him; (*you can welcome him by treating the immigrants with respect and solidarity.*)

A Naked King: He is naked and asks if you can cloth him; (*you can clothe him by donating to our motherhood and St. Vincent de Paul Society*)

A Sick King: He is ill and asks if you can care for him; (*you can help alleviate the suffering of the sick by praying for them*)

A king in prison: He is in prison and asks if you can visit him; (*you can visit him in prison by supporting our prison ministry*)

The Lord says that whatever you do for one of the least brothers and sisters of his, you do for him.' We pray "your kingdom come, your will be done," in the Prayer of our Lord. As people of God's Kingdom and as those who seek first the Kingdom of God, be righteous and diligent.