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NOVENA TO  
CHRIST THE KING

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## FOREWORD

ON the eleventh of December, 1925, Pope Pius XI published his Encyclical Letter on "The Establishment of the Feast of Our Lord Jesus Christ as King." The feast is to be celebrated every year and in all the world on the last Sunday of the month of October, that is, the one just preceding the celebration of all the saints. "For thus, it will happen that the mysteries of the life of Jesus Christ commemorated during the year will be completed and fulfilled by the sacred solemnity of Christ as King, and, before celebrating the glory of all the saints, the glory of Him Who triumphs in all the saints and elect will be preached and emphasized. . . . For imbuing the people with the faith and leading them by faith to the interior joys of life, far more efficacious are the annual celebrations of the sacred mysteries than even the most weighty documents of ecclesiastical teaching. . . . It is this annual observance henceforth of Christ as King which moves us to the highest hope that human society may auspiciously hasten to return to the most loving Savior. . . ."

—*From the Encyclical Letter on The Institution of the Feast of Christ the King.*

## CHRIST THE KING

Adored be Christ the King!  
In lowly human form  
He came unto His own,  
A manger for a throne,  
A mad world to reform.

Praised be Christ the King!  
His own received Him not,  
Rejected, crucified,  
A cruel death He died,—  
Thus wrecking Satan's plot.

Blest be Christ the King!  
His kingdom is this earth  
Created by His word,  
And ruled by Him as Lord,  
Redeemed now by His birth.

Salve Christe Rex!  
Your kingdom is the Church  
Established on the Rock,  
Designed to feed Your flock,—  
The souls You came to search.

Ave Christe Rex!  
Your kingdom is my soul;  
You reign within my heart;  
From You I'll ne'er depart.  
May Heaven be my goal!

—*Sister Mary Anselma, O.S.D.,  
St. Mary's of the Springs.*

# NOVENA TO CHRIST THE KING



## FIRST DAY

### The King of the Prophets

#### SCRIPTURAL READING

David, the royal prophet, sings of the future Messiah, as follows:

“But I am appointed king by him over Sion his holy mountain, preaching his commandment.

“The Lord hath said to me: Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee.

“Ask me, and I will give thee the Gentiles for thy inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession” (Ps. ii. 6, 7, 8).

Another prophet of the Old Testament is Micheas, who prophesies of the coming Messiah in the following words:

“And Thou, Bethlehem Ephrata, art a little one among the thousands of Juda: out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be the ruler in Israel: and his going forth *is* from the beginning, from the days of eternity” (Mich. v. 2).

And Isaias, one of the greatest inspired seers of the days before Christ, announces the coming of the future King and Ruler in the following words:

“Behold the Lord God shall come with

strength, and his arm shall rule: Behold his reward is with him and his work is before him" (Is. xl. 10).

#### MEDITATION

With great anxiety, the prophets of the Old Testament awaited the coming of the promised Messias. They longed for His speedy descent from heaven, they foresaw His work amongst men, they had visions of His passion, of His death and of His resurrection and His glory. They predicted His future kingdom. Already one thousand years before the coming of Christ, the great prophet and royal singer, King David, composed hymns in praise of the future King of Kings. Unsurpassed in beauty of composition and in profoundness and wealth of thought, these hymns are wonderful prayers, breathing forth the spirit of devotion, adoration and love for God and His anointed. They speak of the future Christ as the great king, Whom all other kings shall serve, as the mighty ruler over all nations, as the Prince of Peace, as the Lord Whose kingdom shall consume all other kingdoms, and Whose rule shall stand for ever and ever. King David rejoices at the vision of so mighty, so wonderful, so unending, so just and peaceful a kingdom as that of the future Messias. And the other prophets, Isaias, Jeremias, Daniel, Micheas, Zacharias, etc., continue in the praise and adoration of the future Messianic king and His kingdom. They ardently long for Christ's coming, they rejoice at the vision of the future greatness, might and glory of the promised Messias and His kingdom.

## PRAYER

O my dear and sweet Jesus. I am privileged to have been born in Thy kingdom, the Church of Christ. I do not need to long, like the prophets of old, for Thy coming. I, a son of Thy Church, possess the inheritance of Thy coming. I know Thy greatness, my Lord. I know Thy divinity and humanity hypostatically united in Thy sacred person. I see Thy kingdom, the universal Roman Catholic Church, extending to the four corners of the world. Notwithstanding this my knowledge, I humbly beg Thee to let me learn from these holy prophets a true desire and longing for Thee, my dear Jesus. Create in me a burning desire to be always united with Thee, my eternal Lord and divine King. Amen.

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## SECOND DAY

## The King of the Magi

## SCRIPTURAL READING

On the second day of the novena, we place before our minds the three Kings from the East, adoring the child Jesus, and offering up their gifts to the newborn King of the Jews. Let us follow the beautiful description of this episode in the life of Our Lord as given to us by St. Matthew:

“When Jesus therefore was born in Bethlehem of Juda, in the days of king Herod, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,

“Saying, Where is he that is born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to adore him.

“And king Herod hearing this, was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

“And assembling together all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, he inquired of them where Christ should be born.

“But they said to him: In Bethlehem of Juda. For so it is written by the prophet:

*“And thou Bethlehem the land of Juda art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come forth the captain that shall rule my people Israel.*

“Then Herod, privately calling the wise men, learned diligently of them the time of the star which appeared to them;

“And sending them into Bethlehem, said: Go and diligently inquire after the child, and when you have found him, bring me word again, that I also may come and adore him.

“Who having heard the king, went their way; and behold the star which they had seen in the east, went before them, until it came and stood over where the child was.

“And seeing the star they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

“And entering into the house, they found the child with Mary his mother, and falling down they adored him: and opening their treasures, they offered him gifts; gold, frankincense, and myrrh” (St. Matt. ii. 1-11).



## MEDITATION

Descending from the heights of His heavenly throne, the Incarnate Word selects as His throne, which He is to occupy on the day of His birth and in His early infancy, some few boards of common wood which form the manger of Bethlehem. Notwithstanding the sight of such poverty and misery, the faith of the three Kings remains unshaken and solid. In all the wide country, no one even seems to know of the new born King of Kings; in all the surroundings of the blessed city of Bethlehem, scarcely anybody seems to care for the arrival of the Messiah, for Whom the prophets longed; in all the neighborhood of the stable, where the angels hover, no one finds it worth the while even to salute the newly arrived king of heaven. But all this does not weaken or disturb the strong and living faith of the three Kings from the East. They profess openly before all Judea and before an agnostic court at Jerusalem, their belief in the weak and poor infant Who is the Word of God. Give me, O Lord, the courage and firmness of mind always to profess my Christian faith and never to feel ashamed, before an unbelieving world, of being a humble servant of the divine King.

## PRAYER

O my dear Jesus, I join in spirit the company of the three Kings, representing the gentile world, and I kneel down before the throne which You have selected for the years of Thy youth and which is no other than the manger of Bethlehem, asking and beseeching Thee to accept the gifts I am offering up to

Thy infinite Majesty, the gifts of prayer, self-denial and love and to grant me the grace of a firm and everlasting faith in Thee, my divine Lord and King. Amen.

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## THIRD DAY

### The King of the Church

#### SCRIPTURAL READING

The prophets of the Old Testament announced the coming of the divine King in terms which are clear and plain. Jeremias sung of the days of the coming Messiah in the following words:

“Behold the days come, saith the Lord, and I will raise up to David a just branch: and a king shall reign, and shall be wise: and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth” (Jer. xxiii. 5).

The great prophet Isaias is not less emphatic about the might and glory of the Messianic king for he says:

“For a CHILD IS BORN to us, and a son is given to us, and the government is upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, God the Mighty, the Father of the world to come, the Prince of Peace.

“His empire shall be multiplied, and there shall be no end of peace: he shall sit upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom; to establish it and strengthen it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth and for ever: the zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this” (Is. ix. 6, 7).

In like manner the prophet Daniel foresees the Messianic kingdom, when he says:

“And he gave him power, and glory, and a kingdom: and all peoples, tribes and tongues shall serve him: his power is an everlasting power that shall not be taken away: and his kingdom that shall not be destroyed” (Dan. vii. 14).

#### MEDITATION

As announced by the prophets, Christ, from the very beginning of His earthly mission, set out to establish His kingdom, “a kingdom of God upon earth,” or, as St. Matthew calls it, “a kingdom of heaven.” In this His kingdom are to dwell the children of God: that is, those of the good seed, who do not fall by the wayside or wither away, but who bring forth fruit a hundred-fold. “And the good seed are the children of the kingdom” (Matt. xiii. 38). This kingdom is now an actual fact. Its realization begins right now: “Do penance: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matt. iii. 2). “The time is accomplished, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent, and believe the gospel” (Mark i. 15). Christ lays down the condition of membership to this His kingdom when He says: “Amen, amen, I say to thee, unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” (John iii. 5). Though establishing a “spiritual” community, a “supernatural” realm, a kingdom of “heaven,” on earth, Christ nevertheless rests this His kingdom upon a visible, solid foundation: He establishes His kingdom in the form of a visible Church. And this His Church He builds upon the solid rock, which is

Peter. This relation between the kingdom of heaven and the Church becomes perfectly evident when we take the text of St. Matthew: "Upon this rock I will build *my Church* . . . And I will give to thee the keys of the *kingdom of heaven*" (Matt. xvi. 18, 19).

#### PRAYER

My dear Jesus, You have founded the Church as the kingdom of heaven upon earth, that I may dwell therein. In Thy infinite goodness You have privileged me to be reborn of water and the Holy Ghost, and to have entered the kingdom of God. Grant that I may always appreciate Your great charity towards me and that I may ever profess my membership in Thy holy Church with a heart filled with gladness and gratitude. Oh, my Jesus, let me ever live and die in Thy Holy Church. Amen.

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### FOURTH DAY

#### Hosanna to the King of David

#### SCRIPTURAL READING

Today we meditate on the triumphant entrance of Our Lord into the city of Jerusalem. This event took place on Palm Sunday and is related to us by St. John, the beloved disciple, in the following words:

"And on the next day, a great multitude that was come to the festival day, when they had heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,

"Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried: Hosanna, blessed

is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, the king of Israel.

“And Jesus found a young ass, and sat upon it, as it is written:

*“Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy king cometh, sitting on an ass’s colt”* (John xii. 12-15).

### MEDITATION

The glorious entrance of Our Lord into the city of Jerusalem took place on the eve of His bitter passion. The public ministry of Our Lord had come to a close. For three years Our Lord had been teaching, preaching and ministering to the people. But now, He came once more into the city of Jerusalem with a special purpose and mission, to suffer and die for all of us and to redeem humanity. Before He is to ascend Mount Calvary it is to be made public that He is no ordinary person, but the true and real King of Israel, the promised Messiah, so that no man of good will may ever doubt His sacred mission or His royal dignity. As the Son of David, He is the King of Israel, and as King of Israel, He is the promised Messiah. Privately, many good and faithful people had paid royal homage to Christ, had venerated Him as the King of Israel, and had addressed Him as the Son of King David. But all these instances had been more or less of a private or an occasional nature. To a real and true king, however, is due public and solemn reverence. On Palm Sunday, the people who resided in and around the national capital, unite and join the strangers from afar who had flocked into Jerusalem to

celebrate the Paschal Feast, to receive into the gates of the capital city in public, solemn and triumphal procession, the King of Israel. The multitude acclaims Him as the Son of David. They sing His praise: "Hosanna, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, the king of Israel."

#### PRAYER

O my dear Lord and supreme Master! In spirit I follow Your triumphant entrance and I hear the joyful cries of the multitude. I bend my knee in worship and adoration before Thee, the divine King, and I proclaim from the depth of my heart the exalted dignity of Your infinite Majesty. I gladly join the ranks of Thy holy procession and following Thy sacred footsteps I beg and beseech Thee, my divine King, to bless me, to save me from the great misfortune of ever becoming separated from Thee, and to keep me ever nearer and nearer to Your sacred self. Amen.

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### FIFTH DAY

#### "My Kingdom Is Not of This World"

##### SCRIPTURAL READING

On the fifth day of the novena, we follow our dear Lord and Savior, as He is privately questioned and examined by the Roman Governor, Pontius Pilate. St. John the Evangelist relates to us the conversation which took place between Our Lord Jesus Christ and the Roman Governor. He says:

"Pilate therefore went into the hall again, and called Jesus, and said to him: Art thou the king of the Jews?"

“Jesus answered: Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or have others told it thee of me?”

“Pilate answered: Am I a Jew? Thy own nation, and the chief priests, have delivered thee up to me: what hast thou done?”

“Jesus answered: My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would certainly strive that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now my kingdom is not from hence.

“Pilate therefore said to him: Art thou a king then? Jesus answered: Thou sayest that I am a king. For this was I born, and for this came I into the world; that I should give testimony to the truth. Every one that is of the truth, heareth my voice” (John xviii. 33-37).

#### MEDITATION

Pharisees and high priests, envious and jealous of Our Lord Jesus Christ, accuse the innocent Lamb of God before the Roman Governor. Not having any charge to bring against His personal conduct or private or public life, they resort to the strategy of accusing Him of His claim to royal dignity. Blinded by anger, envy and passion, high priests and Pharisees become an instrument in the fulfillment of the prophecies. By charging Christ with His claim to royal dignity, they wish to provoke the suspicion of the Roman Governor, for any crime, but this may be easily forgiven by Roman authorities. The Emperor in the capital and the Roman Officialdom were ever on the outlook to suppress any political uprising. In view of the seriousness of the accusation, Christ, calmly and with solemnity, reaffirms

before the Roman Governor His claim to the kingship. But He is no political rival to the imperial throne at Rome. In the midst of all the injustice shown to Him, Christ is so good and so willing as to explain to the political authorities the real nature of His kingship. "My kingdom is not of this world." It has nothing to do with the political state. It is a spiritual kingdom. It is a kingdom of truth. And He Himself is a spiritual king, the prince of truth and justice, the ruler of a real kingdom, which, by its nature, is spiritual.

#### PRAYER

Grant, O dear Lord, that I may learn to abandon more and more all thoughts of worldly power and of earthly goods. Help me, I beg Thee, O Jesus, that I may understand better and better the true nature of the spiritual kingdom of Christ. I promise Thee, O my divine King, that in future, all my concerns shall be directed to advance the things of the soul, to spread the kingdom of God and to consider worldly affairs only of lesser and secondary importance. Grant me, O divine King, the grace to persevere faithfully in this resolution. Amen.

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### SIXTH DAY

#### The Cross—the Throne of Christ

#### SCRIPTURAL READING

St. John the Evangelist has preserved for us the text of the inscription affixed to the cross, which reads as follows:



“And Pilate wrote a title also, and he put it upon the cross. And the writing was: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

“This title therefore many of the Jews did read: because the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, in Greek, and in Latin.

“Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate: Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am the King of the Jews.

“Pilate answered: What I have written, I have written” (John xix. 19-22).

#### MEDITATION

It was the custom of the ancient world to attach a little inscription to the instrument of torture, explaining the crime of the one committed to die. Our Lord was treated like a common criminal. No guilt could be ascribed to him. His crime is that of being the king of the Jews. It is no crime, but a prerogative to die for the sins of the people. He bows His head in death to expiate, as king and royal victim, the sins of the world. Christ's royal death is proclaimed in the languages of the then-known world. His kingship is held up as a reproach to the *Jewish* people. His royal dignity is announced to the *Greeks*, the representatives of culture, learning and refinement of the ancient world. His kingship, again, is placed, in *Latin*, before the eyes of those in power and authority, the Romans. The Jews feel reproached and guilty of the crime committed on the dying Jesus. They hurry to Pontius Pilate to ask him, though in vain, to change the text of the inscription.

## PRAYER

The cross calls to mind the countless sins I have committed. I, by my sins, by my countless sins, have helped to prepare for Thee, the royal victim, a throne so hard, so painful, so cruel, so outrageous, that no meaner instrument of torture could be found in the whole world. O my dear Jesus, I look at my innumerable sins and then at Thy cross, on which Thou so patiently suffered the most ignominious death. I am sorry for having caused Thee, my dear Jesus, these terrible pains and sufferings. I prostrate myself before Thy holy cross which forms the throne of Thy infinite majesty on Mount Calvary, and from the bottom of my heart, I repent my shameless sins and I beg Thee, to pardon my faults and to forgive my guilt. Amen.

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## SEVENTH DAY

## The Eucharistic King

## SCRIPTURAL READING

The Psalmist chants the praise of the Eucharistic King in the following words:

“With thee is my praise in a great church: I will pay my vows in the sight of them that fear him.

“The poor shall eat and shall be filled: and they shall praise the Lord that seek him: their hearts shall live for ever and ever.

“All the ends of the earth shall remember, and shall be converted to the Lord; And all

the kindreds of the Gentiles shall adore in his sight.

“For the kingdom is the Lord’s; and he shall have dominion over the nations.

“All the fat ones of the earth have eaten and have adored: all they that go down to the earth shall fall before him.

“And to him my soul shall live: and my seed shall serve him.

“There shall be declared to the Lord a generation to come: and the heavens shall shew forth his justice to a people that shall be born, which the Lord hath made” (Ps. xxi. 26-32).

#### MEDITATION

What holy joy would have filled the hearts of the prophets if they had seen, in vision, the royal banquet the Messianic king was going to prepare for the sons and daughters of the coming kingdom. And after having come into this world, Christ Himself rejoiced anticipating the infinite gladness of His divine soul, to give Himself as food and nourishment to the children of men. “With desire I have desired to eat this pasch with you, before I suffer. For I say to you, that from this time, I will not eat it, till it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God” (Luke xxii. 15, 16). In His infinite love for us, Christ wishes to give Himself entirely to us, to be with us, to dwell and reign within the sanctuary of our human soul: “He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, abideth in me, and I in him” (John vi. 57). Surely and truly, the prophet is right when he says of the Lord: “My delights were

to be with the children of men" (Prov. viii. 31). With the greatest tenderness of heart, the divine king invites His beloved ones to His Eucharistic repast: "Come to me, all you that labour, and are burdened and I will refresh you" (Matt. xi. 28). "Come, eat my bread, and drink the wine which I have mingled for you" (Prov. ix. 5) With solicitude, the great King of heaven knocks at the door of the human heart, desiring to be let in and to dine with us. "Behold, I stand at the gate, and knock. If any man shall hear my voice, and open to me the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Apoc. iii. 20). In His infinite goodness and kindness of heart, the Lord promises eternal life to all who approach worthily His sacred table: "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath everlasting life: and I will raise him up in the last day" (John vi. 55).

#### PRAYER

O my dear Lord and Jesus, I humbly prostrate myself before Thy sacred altar and adore Thee in the Blessed Sacrament. I firmly believe that Thou art here present with Thy sacred body and soul, with Thy humanity and divinity. I hope in Thee, Thou Who art my salvation and my eternal life! I love Thee, from the depths of my heart, with my whole soul and with all my strength, and I wish ever to be united with Thee, my dear, sweet Jesus and Eucharistic King. Amen.

## EIGHTH DAY

### The King of My Soul

#### SCRIPTURAL READING

The great prophet Isaias understands well the longing of a human soul, for he writes:

“Behold my servant, I will uphold him: my elect, my soul delighteth in him: I have given my spirit upon him, he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles” (Is. xlii. 1). The Psalmist brings forth the same truth in the following words:

“And to him my soul shall live: and my seed shall serve him” (Ps. xxi. 31).

That intimate union of the soul and the divine King is, again, spoken of by the same royal singer when he says:

“And the king shall greatly desire thy beauty, for he is the Lord thy God, and him they shall adore” (Ps. xliv. 12).

And again:

“For thou art the most high Lord over all the earth: thou art exalted exceedingly above all gods.

“You that love the Lord, hate evil: the Lord preserveth the souls of his saints, he will deliver them out of the hand of the sinner.

“Light is risen to the just, and joy to the right of heart.

“Rejoice, ye just, in the Lord: and give praise to the remembrance of his holiness” (Ps. xcvi. 9-12).

#### MEDITATION

Though Christ, as God, had power over this world, He did not claim this earthly power.

He wishes to take possession of the kingdom of human souls, of human hearts. He longs to rule the hearts of men, to enter into the innermost sanctuary of human feelings, sentiments, wishes, and thoughts. He aims to reign from the throne of the human heart. He desires to control every vein, every muscle, every beat, every drop of blood which accounts for the activities of the human heart. He longs for love: that this His infinite love for man may be, in some way, answered by a pure and holy love of men for Jesus. He wishes to enkindle our cold and distant hearts. He longs to inflame the fires of true love and charity in our soul. He craves for a burning and consuming fire of love, for a love that is divine, for a love that culminates in a true union of the human soul with God Himself. Truly, Thou, O God, hast created me for Thyself and my heart is restless till it rests in Thee, O my Lord and God (St. Augustine).

#### PRAYER

In my human weakness, I have only a faint idea of Thy infinite love, O Jesus, for me, a poor sinner. But I beg Thee, dear Jesus, do not despise the poverty of a supplicant heart. In all humility I desire to prepare myself for Your joyful entrance into my heart. Adorn it with Thy sacred presence. Take possession of me. O dear Jesus, of all the faculties of my body and soul, of my whole being, that now and in future, I may not live for myself, but for Thee and in Thee, O my sweet Jesus. Amen.

## NINTH DAY

### The King of Eternal Glory

#### SCRIPTURAL READING

The glory of the divine King in heaven is the subject of the 149th Psalm and reads as follows:

“Sing ye to the Lord a new canticle: let his praise be in the church of the saints.

“Let Israel rejoice in him that made him: and let the children of Sion be joyful in their king.

“Let them praise his name in choir: let them sing to him with the timbrel and the psaltery.

“For the Lord is well pleased with his people: and he will exalt the meek unto salvation.

“The saints shall rejoice in glory: they shall be joyful in their beds.

“The high praises of God shall be in their mouth: and two-edged swords in their hands:

“To execute vengeance upon the nations, chastisements among the people:

“To bind their kings with fetters, and their nobles with muscles of iron.

“To execute upon them the judgment that is written: this glory is to all his saints. Alleluia.”

#### MEDITATION

Christ, the king of the prophets, the king of the Church, is also the king in the heights of heaven, the king of eternal glory. Seated on the throne of eternity, He receives the homage and adoration of the legions of angels

and archangels, of the multitudes of saints, of the armies of martyrs and confessors, of the choirs of holy virgins and priests, bishops, patriarchs and popes. All heavenly powers will bend in adoration, proclaiming the unending praise of the eternal king of Israel, of the mighty ruler of heaven and earth, of the Lord of time and eternity. There will be no end of joy and happiness, and eternal praise will reëcho under the ceilings of the celestial palace. And from one end of heaven to the other will resound the name of the king of eternal glory. St. John, in holy vision, describes heaven opened, and gazing on the glorious king of heaven he writes: "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called faithful and true, and with justice doth he judge and fight. And his eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many diadems, and he had a name written, which no man knoweth but himself. And he was clothed with a garment sprinkled with blood; and his name is called, **THE WORD OF GOD**. And the armies that are in heaven followed him on white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth proceedeth a sharp two-edged sword; that with it he may strike the nations. And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness of the wrath of God the Almighty. And he hath on his garment, and on his thigh written: **KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS**" (Apoc. xix. 11-16).



## PRAYER

Thou, O King of Kings, I adore Your infinite majesty. Thou art the Lord of Lords, the mighty ruler of the universe. I adore Thee, I worship Thee. Humbly I prostrate myself before Thy infinite throne begging and beseeching Thy infinite goodness to grant to me a life of faithful service to Thee, O Lord, here below, and eternal bliss, hereafter, that one day I may be counted with the blessed in heaven to sing Your eternal praise. Amen.

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## PRAYER

*(To be said every day of the Novena)*

Almighty, eternal God, Who wishes to renew everything in Your beloved Son, the king of the whole world, grant, we beseech Thee, that all the families of nations, divided by the wounds of sin, may be brought under His sweet rule. Who livest and reignest, world without end.—*From the Missal.*

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## CHRIST THE KING

We sing to Thee, O Christ the King,  
And gladly raise the songs of praise  
Of Thy great glory, till they ring  
Adown the aisles of time, ablaze  
With all the pageantry of power.

Thou art the Christ, and dost impart  
Thy love to all who dwell above,  
And to the clean and pure of heart  
On earth, who like the simple dove,  
Fulfill Your will, inquiring not the cause.

Thy kingdom come on earth apace,  
Thy will be done by us, until  
We see Thy glories face to face,  
And join angelic choirs that trill  
Sublime hosannas to our Christ the King.

O Christ the King, we worship Thee  
With our whole heart and soul and mind,  
Adoring Thee on bended knee,  
And begging grace for all mankind  
To reign with Thee for all eternity.

—*Sister Mary Anselma, O.S.D.,  
St. Mary's of the Springs.*

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## THE EPISTLE OF THE FEAST OF CHRIST THE KING

“Brethren: Giving thanks to God the Father, who hath made us worthy to be partakers of the lot of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love, In whom we have redemption through his blood, the remission of sins; Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature: For in him were all things created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones, or dominations, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him and in him. And he is

before all, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things he may hold the primacy: Because in him, it hath well pleased *the Father*, that all fulness should dwell; And through him to reconcile all things unto himself, making peace through the blood of his cross, both as to the things on earth, and the things that are in heaven; in Christ Jesus Our Lord" (Col. i. 12-20).

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## THE PREFACE OF THE MASS

It is truly worthy and just, right and wholesome, that we should give thanks, always and everywhere, to Thee, O holy Lord, Almighty Father, and eternal God; Who didst anoint with the oil of gladness Thine only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, Our Lord, the eternal Priest and the King of the whole world; that offering up Himself on the altar of the cross, as an immaculate and peace-bringing Victim. He may perform the sacrament of the world's redemption. Uniting all men under His rule, He mayest deliver to Your infinite Majesty an everlasting and world-wide kingdom, a kingdom of truth and of life, a kingdom of sanctity and grace, a kingdom of justice, love and peace. And therefore, with the Angels and Archangels, with the Thrones and Dominations, with the whole heavenly army, we sing a hymn to Your praise, saying without ceasing: Holy, holy, holy, the Lord God Sabaoth! Heaven and earth are full of Your Glory! Hosanna in the highest! Blessed be He who

cometh in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!

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## THE KINGSHIP IN THE APOCALYPSE OF ST. JOHN

“Grace be unto you and peace from him that is, and that was, and that is to come, and from the seven spirits which are before his throne.

“And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth, who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,

“And hath made us a kingdom, and priests to God and his Father, to him be glory and empire for ever and ever. Amen” (Apoc. i. 4-6.)

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## CONSECRATION OF THE HUMAN RACE TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

*Prescribed by His Holiness, Pope Pius XI*

Most sweet Jesus, Redeemer of the human race, look down upon us humbly prostrate before Thy altar. We are Thine, and Thine we wish to be; but to be more surely united with Thee, behold each one of us freely consecrates himself today to Thy Most Sacred Heart. Many indeed have never known Thee; many too, despising Thy precepts, have rejected Thee. Have mercy on them all, most merciful Jesus, and draw them to Thy Sacred Heart. Be thou King, O Lord, not only of the faithful

who have never forsaken Thee, but also of the prodigal children who have abandoned Thee; grant that they may quickly return to their Father's house lest they die of wretchedness and hunger. Be Thou King of those who are deceived by erroneous opinions, or whom discord keeps aloof, and call them back to the harbor of truth and unity of faith, so that soon there may be but one flock and one Shepherd. Be Thou King of all those who are still involved in the darkness of idolatry or of Islamism, and refuse not to draw them all into the light and kingdom of God. Turn Thine eyes of mercy toward the children of that race, once Thy chosen people. Of old they called down upon themselves the Blood of the Savior; may It now descend upon them a laver of redemption and of life. Grant, O Lord, to Thy Church assurance of freedom and immunity from harm; give peace and order to all nations, and make the earth resound from pole to pole with one cry: Praise to the Divine Heart that wrought our salvation; to It be glory and honor forever. Amen.

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## CHRIST THE KING

Praised be Christ the King!  
His kingdom come on earth today,  
Where passions strive and sirens sing,  
Where men have lost all virtue's way.

Blest be Christ the King!  
Forever modern, sympathetic, true,  
Forever dying for His sheep astray;  
For faithful saints, for me, for you.

Hail to Christ the King!  
He comes to rule the Church His bride,  
His mystic body here on earth;  
His kingdom vast for which He died . .  
How infinite must be its worth.

—*Sister Mary Anselma, O.S.D.,  
St. Mary's of the Springs.*

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## CHRIST, KING AND SHEPHERD

Christ was king in the types and prophecies of the Old Testament. The royal character of the future Messiah was fully announced by the prophets. The prophecies reach far back in time. The psalms are already very distinct in announcing the future Messianic kingdom. "For the kingdom is the Lord's," sings the royal singer (Ps. xxi. 29). "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a sceptre of uprightness" (Ps. xliv. 7). The future Messiah is styled "the ruler that is to come out of Jacob" (Num. xxiv. 18), "who is constituted by the Father, King over His Holy Mount of Sion, and who will receive the nations as His inheritance, and the things of the earth for His possession" (Ps. ii. 8).

Ezechiel, as many of the other prophets, speaks of the Messiah as the king of peace. "And I will make a covenant of peace with them, it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: . . . And my tabernacle shall be with them: and I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (Ezech. xxxvii. 26-27). Zacharias speaks thus: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of

Sion, shout for joy, O daughter of Jerusalem: BEHOLD THY KING will come to thee, the just and saviour" (Zach. ix. 9). "He shall speak peace to the Gentiles" (Zach. ix. 10).

While the great mass of the Jews at the time of Jesus Christ had absolutely lost sight of the supernatural nature of the Messianic kingdom, there remained still a small group of pious men and women who were not spoiled by earthly and political aspirations. They longed for a Messianic kingdom of truth and justice. Zachary is one of these holy souls, who prayed for a "kingdom of the remission of sins," "of the knowledge of salvation" and "of the enlightenment of those that sit in the darkness and in the shadow of death" (Luke i. 77-79). The three wise kings came from the east to "adore" the newborn king of the Jews. Anna, the prophetess, "who departed not from the temple," "spoke of him to all that looked for the redemption of Israel" (Luke ii. 37, 38). Simeon, too, was a man whose soul breathed forth no worldly ambitions; but was "waiting for the consolation of Israel" (Luke ii. 25). Joseph of Arimathea, the noble counsellor, is another pious man who belongs to this group of chosen souls (Mark xv. 43).

When Christ appeared in this world, He claimed royal dignity. Scarcely had He been born when the question was asked: "Where is he that is born king of the Jews?" (Matt. ii. 2). The Jews wished to make Him their king. Pious men addressed Him reverently as their king: "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the king of Israel" (John i. 49). Christ enters as king the city of Jerusalem: "*Fear not,*

*daughter of Sion, behold thy king cometh, sitting on an ass's colt*" (John xii. 15). "Hosanna, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, the king of Israel" (John xii. 13). The Jews resort to His kingly claim to accuse Him before Pontius Pilate. "Shall I crucify your king?" (John xix. 15). The conversation of the Roman governor with the accused centers around Christ's claim of the royal dignity: "Pilate therefore said to him: Art thou a king then? Jesus answered: Thou sayest that I am a king" (John xviii. 37). The inscription on the cross, finally, confirms the kingship of Christ: "JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS" (John xix. 19).

Christ during His life had accepted royal homage. Christ in the hour of death had claimed the royal title. However, Christ seldom referred to Himself as king when speaking to the plain people. He substituted for the word king a term which contained all the elements of His royal leadership, yet revealed better the true nature of His kingship. This new term, too, permitted a more intimate relationship between the royal majesty and the simple hearts of His people. In ancient times, the kings, when not engaged in actual warfare or the concerns of their government, spent their time of leisure by watching over the herds. The pastorship was a royal occupation. As kings led their flocks to their pastures, so the divine king will lead His flock to the heavenly meadows. Christ the king speaks of Himself as the true shepherd.

Christ is the true shepherd of the Christian flock. Christ is the shepherd of sheep. Why,



we may ask, did Christ choose the symbol of sheep? Are not cattle and horses by far more valuable than sheep? Certainly they are. But the parable of the sheep permits the divine Master to illustrate the true character of His royal leadership. Cattle and horses must be driven at the point of a stick, or with the swing of a whip. Sheep willingly follow their shepherd; the shepherd leads his flock. Christ does not wish to drive His followers by means of force. He wishes them to follow His footsteps willingly, joyfully and confidently. The leadership of Christ and the free will following of the sheep may never be lost sight of in the Messianic kingdom.

Christ was king. Christ was shepherd. In their last analysis, both the kingship and shepherdship of Christ are identical. In virtue of the kingship of Christ, His foundation became a real kingdom, a church. In virtue of the shepherdship of Christ, the Bishops and parish priests have jurisdiction over their flock; they are the pastors of their congregation. "For Christ therefore we are ambassadors" (2 Cor. v. 20). "Take heed to yourselves, and to the whole flock, wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops, to rule the Church of God" (Acts xx. 28), and "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking care of *it*, not by constraint, but willingly according to God" (1 Pet. v. 2). The shepherdship of the pastor, therefore, as well as of the Church which is the supernatural and visible kingdom of God, originated in the kingship of Christ. "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep" (John x. 11).

“Feed my lambs, feed my sheep” (John xxi. 15-17).

The kingship of the parish priest demands the supervision of his parish. This supervision is to be seen first in the pastor's endeavor to keep from his flock all that is pernicious to the spiritual welfare of his sheep. To fight evil, it is best to supplant it by good. To introduce good Christian newspapers, magazines and books in his parish, to establish parochial schools, to promote a well-regulated family life, to foster and cultivate Christian societies, to attend to every form of Christian organization, is the task of the zealous pastor. His care must not be exercised merely in a summary way. The good pastor attends to the individual cases, to the children, to those to be married, to the sick, the poor, the aged, to converts, and to the vocations. He tries to extend the Christian influence over institutions located in his parish, such as asylums, prisons, and endeavors to win the authorities of the state, city and county for the recognition of Christian principles.

Needless to say, the good sheep should follow their shepherd. They are to hear his voice, they are to harken to his footsteps. The exhortation St. Paul gave to the Hebrews applies, too, to the Christian of the twentieth century: “Obey your prelates, and be subject to them. For they watch as being to render an account of your souls: that they may do this with joy, and not with grief. For this is not expedient for you. Pray for us” (Heb. xiii. 17, 18).

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