# Sunday 34th in Ordinary Time: The Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe (A)

**Gospel text (*Mt* 25:31-46):** Jesus said to his disciples: "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit upon his glorious throne, and all the nations will be assembled before him. And he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. 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. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.' Then the righteous will answer him and say, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you?' And the king will say to them in reply, 'Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of the least brothers of mine, you did for me.'

Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you accursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, a stranger and you gave me no welcome, naked and you gave me no clothing, ill and in prison, and you did not care for me.' Then they will answer and say, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or ill or in prison, and not minister to your needs?' He will answer them, 'Amen, I say to you, what you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for me.' And these will go off to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."

***"Whatever you did for one of the least brothers of mine, you did for me"***

Fr. Antoni POU OSB Monk of Montserrat

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Today, Jesus speaks to us about the final judgment. And with that metaphorical image of sheep and goats, He shows us that it will be a judgment of love. Saint John of the Cross tells us: “In the evening of life, we will be judged on love alone.”

Saint Ignatius of Loyola, says in his meditation “Contemplation to Attain the Love of God”: “love is shown more in deeds than in words”. And today's Gospel is very illustrative. Every act of charity we do, we do it to the very Christ: “For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me” (Mt 25:34-36). Even more so: “Whatever you did for one of the least brothers of mine, you did for me” (Mt 25:40).

This Gospel passage, which grounds us in reality, sets the feast of the judgment of Christ the King in its place. The kingship of Christ is something quite different from dominance; it is simply the fundamental reality of existence: love will have the last word.

Jesus shows us that the meaning of kingship - or authority - is serving others. He declared Himself as Teacher and Master (cf. Jn 13:13), and also as King (cf. Jn 18:37), but He exercised His mastery by washing the disciples' feet (cf. Jn 13:4 ff.), and reigned by giving His life. Jesus Christ reigns, first, from a humble cradle (a manger!) and then, from a very uncomfortable throne, that is, the Cross.

On the Cross there was an inscription that said “Jesus the Nazorean, the King of the Jews” (Jn 19:19): what appearances denied was confirmed by the deep reality of the mystery of God, for Jesus reigns from his Cross and He judges us in love. “We will be judged on love alone.”

## *Thoughts on Today's Gospel*

- “Give God proof of your gratitude for you are one who can benefit and not one who needs to be benefited.... Be rich not only in possessions but also in piety; not only in gold but in virtue.” (Saint Gregory Nazianzen)

- “If we put love for our neighbour into practice in accordance with the Gospel message, we make room for God's dominion and his Kingdom is actualized among us. If, instead, each one thinks only of his or her own interests, the world can only go to ruin.” (Benedict XVI)

- “Christ the Lord already reigns through the Church, but all the things of this world are not yet subjected to him. The triumph of Christ's kingdom will not come about without one last assault by the powers of evil.” (Catechism Of The Catholic Church, Nº 680)