

**THE SOLEMNITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST,  
KING OF THE UNIVERSE (YEAR B)**

November 21, 2021

Daniel 7:13–14 • Revelation 1:5–8 • John 18:33b–37

**I.**

I spent the week before last hiking in New Mexico.

During my time in Albuquerque,  
I toured Petroglyph National Monument.

It's fascinating site where 25,000 rock pictures, or petroglyphs,  
have been carved into a 17-mile-long escarpment of volcanic rock.

It's thought that these petroglyphs were made between 1300 and 1690.

Most of the petroglyphs were made by Native Americans,  
descendants of today's Pueblo tribe.

The images are deeply meaningful to the Pueblo  
because they express the connection between Native Americans  
and their ancestral land.

I was also interested to learn about the petroglyphs made by Spanish settlers.

I saw one that was a Latin Cross.

Coincidentally, the shape of the Cathedral is a Latin Cross:  
the long vertical "beam" is the nave,  
and the shorter, horizontal "beam" is the transept.

Whoever inscribed that cross in the rock did so as a mark of identity.

It was a way of saying,  
"As these other carving express the identity of the local inhabitants,  
this symbol expresses who we are: Christians."

## II.

The passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ defines our lives as Christians.

The meaning of today's feast—the kingship of Christ—is based on the Cross.

Jesus is Lord of the universe  
because he has saved all people by his Cross and resurrection.

This truth is expressed in today's Preface to the Eucharistic Prayer:

“You anointed your Only Begotten Son...  
as eternal Priest and King of all creation,  
so that, **by offering himself on the altar of the Cross...**  
he might accomplish the mysteries of human redemption.”

In the Gospel,  
this is what Pontius Pilate fails to grasp:

Jesus is king not in the typical sense of politically dominating a group of people,  
but in the broader sense of having authority over everything—  
because he is the source of all truth:

“My kingdom does not belong to this world. ...  
You say I am a king.  
For this I was born and for this I came into the world,  
to testify to the truth.  
Everyone who belongs to truth listens to my voice.”

Christ is king;  
he is the source of meaning not only for our lives,  
but for the lives of all people.

We hear something different in the surrounding culture:

“Find your own path”;  
“Do you”;  
“Be authentic.”

We believe something different:  
that Christ is the Savior of all people.

We respect everyone's freedom to believe that or not,  
but we hold that Jesus Christ is the source of meaning for everyone's life.

The Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) taught that  
Christ not only fully revealed God;  
he also fully revealed the meaning of humanity:

“The truth is that only in the mystery of the incarnate Word [Christ]  
does the mystery of man take on light. ...  
Christ... by the revelation of the mystery of the Father and His love,  
fully reveals man to man himself and makes his supreme calling clear.”  
(*Gaudium et spes*, no. 22).

The kingship of Christ has a universal breadth and profound depth.

“Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.”

Christ is the king of the universe—but is he the king of our lives?

Is he king of how we choose to live each day?

Does he reign over our thoughts, our words, and our actions?

Christ offers to humanity the reason for being,  
which is a beautiful way to live.

His kingdom is way of life he establishes.

It is the fulfilment of our loftiest aspirations.

These are ideals we seek for family, our country, and for the whole world.

We hear about these ideals in today's Preface:

“A kingdom of truth and life,  
a kingdom of holiness and grace,  
a kingdom of justice, love and peace.”

Those terms “holiness and grace” are important  
because they mean that this kingdom is based on God.

Men and women cannot establish it by themselves;  
it is not a political ideology or social movement, however noble.

Christ's kingdom requires God's action;  
it is God who moves men and women to conversion.

After all, most of us find it easier to point out injustices in the world  
than to admit our own sins,  
which contribute to those injustices.

There's something more:  
we are not only "subjects" of Christ the king.

We **are** his kingdom,  
according to the Second Reading, which is drawn from the Book of Revelation.

And this comes about through God's gift—  
the salvation of the Cross:

"To him who has freed us from our sins by his blood,  
**who has made us into a kingdom,**  
priests for his God and Father,  
to him be glory and power forever and ever. Amen."

### III.

Today we recall the 115<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the dedication of this cathedral.

The church was consecrated on Thanksgiving Day: November 29, 1906.

Officiating over the ceremonies was Archbishop Diomedede Falconio,  
papal representative to the American bishops.

An important statement was being made by choosing Thanksgiving Day,  
and by having the papal representative officiate:

You could be a good Catholic and a patriotic American,  
which, at that time, was a controversial proposition in the South.

So, this Cathedral is the statement of our identity;  
it's our massive and ornate petroglyph.

This is who we are;  
this is the truth for everyone person.

Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

He is Lord of the universe who died for us,  
to rescue us from our sins,  
and to make us into the men and women we are meant to be.

Long live Christ the King.