



Feast of Christ the King

On Sunday, November 25, we celebrate the Feast of the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe (formerly known as the Feast of Christ the King). This feast was established by Pope Pius XI in 1925 and was originally celebrated on the last Sunday of October.

The 1920s saw a rise in secularism, in which people increasingly lived their lives as if God did not exist. Dictatorships flourished and many people were taken in by these earthly leaders. Many Christians (including Catholics) began to doubt the authority and existence of Christ and to question the power of the Church to continue Christ's authority. Pope Pius XI felt that a feast celebrating the kingship of Christ over all humanity would be especially appropriate at this time when respect for Christ and for the Church was declining rapidly.

As he stated in his encyclical *Quas primas*, by which he instituted this feast day, Pope Pius XI hoped that this feast would have three effects:

1. That nations would see that the Church has the right to freedom, and immunity from the state (*Quas Primas 32*)
2. That leaders and nations would see that they are bound to give respect to Christ (*Quas Primas 31*)
3. That the faithful would gain strength and courage from the celebration of the feast, as we are reminded that Christ must reign in our hearts, minds, wills and bodies (*Quas primas 33*).

The need for such a feast continues to exist in our world today, as the problems observed by Pope Pius XI have not vanished but appear instead to have worsened. The embrace of individualism in today's society moves Jesus from the central role He is meant to occupy in the lives of Christians. This feast allows us to reaffirm and refocus our faith and respect in the kingship of Jesus just as it did when it was first established.

With the calendar reforms of 1969, the celebration of the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe was moved from the last Sunday in October to the final Sunday of Ordinary Time, the Sunday before Advent. It is fitting to celebrate Christ's kingship right before Advent, when we liturgically prepare for the arrival of the promised Messiah. As we prepare to celebrate the birth of the infant, we also meditate on the Second and Final coming of Christ the King.

*A partial indulgence is granted to the faithful, who piously recite the Act of Dedication of the Human Race to Jesus Christ King. A **plenary indulgence** is granted, if it is recited publicly on the feast of our Lord Jesus Christ King.*

Prayer:

Most sweet Jesus, Redeemer of the human race, look down upon us humbly prostrate before you. We are yours, and yours we wish to be; but to be more surely united with you, behold each one of us freely consecrates himself today to your Most Sacred Heart. Many indeed have never known you; many, too, despising your precepts, have rejected you. Have mercy on them all, most merciful Jesus, and draw them to your Sacred Heart. Be King, O Lord, not only of the faithful who have never forsaken you, but also of the prodigal children who have abandoned you; grant that they may quickly return to their Father's house, lest they die of wretchedness and hunger. Be King of those who are deceived by erroneous opinions, or whom discord keeps aloof, and call them back to the harbor of truth and the unity of faith, so that soon there may be but one flock and one Shepherd. Grant, O Lord, to your Church assurance of freedom and immunity from harm; give tranquility of order to all nations; 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 for ever. Amen.

Prayer Source: *Enchiridion of Indulgences*, June 29, 1968