

From the Pastor
November 22, 2020
Our Lord Jesus Christ the King
The Last Sunday After Pentecost

CHRIST THE KING

We come today to the Last Sunday of the Church's Year of Grace, the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ the King. Next week when we come to Holy Mass, we will see the solemn and somber color of violet reminding us that we have placed our feet once more along the path of holiness as we begin a New Year of Grace on the First Sunday in Advent. The poet T.S. Eliot wrote in his wonderful poem *Ash Wednesday* that the Church journeys as a ship along the violet and violet of the seas. He was referring to one Advent following another.

The Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ the King is of relatively recent origin; it was established only in 1923. At that time, an unprecedented persecution of the Church had begun both in Spain and in Mexico. During the Spanish Civil War of 1936 to 1939 over 4,000 priests were killed in Spain and more than 20,000 religious sisters and brothers. Many were killed in terrible ways. Some were clubbed into unconsciousness and fed to the wild animals of the zoos. Among the many martyred religious were a great number of members of the Marianist Order who serve St. Paul's in such a dedicated and Christ-like way. And in Mexico churches were burned and many were tortured in unbelievable ways. This official persecution of the Church in Mexico lasted until 1992. Blessed Miguel Pro was executed before a firing squad for Christ the King on November 23, 1927. His dying words were *Viva Cristo Rey! Long live Christ the King!*

At the time the Church established the Feast of Christ the King. This was to remind all the faithful that Our Lord is not only the Lord and God of individuals but also of nations and all society. As our father and patron St. Paul the Apostle reminds us, *Oportet illum regnare. (He must reign)*. Christ is King of all the faithful but also of all the nations. Therefore, all of society must be subject to his rule. When the Spanish and Mexican martyrs were being executed, they cried out *Viva Cristo Rey! Long live Christ the King!*

May we too ever have that phrase upon our lips. May Christ reign in our hearts and souls; may Christ reign over our families; may Christ reign over our nation and all the peoples of the world!

THANKSGIVING DAY MASS: On Thursday November 26th we keep our national holiday of Thanksgiving Day. As everyone is aware, this is not a Holy Day of Obligation, nor is it even a Catholic Feast. However, for those who would like to attend Holy Mass on this day the one Mass will be on Thanksgiving Day at 10.00AM. Please note there is no Mass on Wednesday evening November 25th. Please consider coming to Holy Mass on Thanksgiving Day and bringing a food item for the poor on Thanksgiving. We are most grateful to Mr. and Mrs. Joe and Linda Curro and their staff who so lovingly attend the needs of the homeless and poor in our area in our food pantry. Please place food items in the narthex (vestibule) of the Church. Due to Covid-19 restrictions this year we will not process with the food to place it in the sanctuary

The Food Pantry has been built in blessed and eternal memory of Mrs. Angela Lostritto. A plaque with her name on it welcomes those who seek the charity of Christ. I am so pleased that at all the buildings and centers of our parish campus a statue of Our Lady welcomes us. As we enter the Church, Our Lady of Grace stands to greet us. As we enter Monsignor Costa Hall, Our Lady Seat of Wisdom welcomes us, and she prays our dear children will learn religion well. At the entrance to the Food Pantry, the poor and homeless need not feel embarrassment, because here Our Lady of Banneaux stands to show her love for those who, like her, are pure and humble of Heart. That statue was commissioned by Father Potterton, the founding pastor of St. Paul. How pleased I am that it is still with us and has been restored as part of our Capital Campaign. Father Potterton loved Our Lady of Banneaux because he himself was an alumnus of the North American College at Louvain (Belgium) of which She is Patron and took great delight in her presence.

Yes, here at St. Paul's we have three statues of the Blessed Mother outdoors and images of her in the Church that are beyond enumeration. But, as St. Bernard wrote, *de Maria, numquam satis. (Of Mary, there can never be enough)*. I have been blessed to be the pastor of a parish where Our Lady is so loved and venerated.

TREE LIGHTING: Please make every effort to attend our Tree Lighting on the evening of December 5th, immediately after the 4:00PM Mass. We are grateful to the Knights and Squires for providing this fun-filled and grace-filled evening.

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY: On Tuesday, December 8th, we celebrate the Patronal Feast of the United States of America. As we are all aware, the obligation to attend Mass has been dispensed since March. This is, of course, due to worldwide pandemic. Therefore, while not obligatory, it would be a beautiful gift to Our Lady to attend Holy Mass in her honor. **Please** consider coming to Mass that day to honor the Immaculate One. Holy Mass will be celebrated **Monday, December 7th, at 7:00PM, and on Tuesday, December 8th at 9:00AM and 12:15PM.** *Vergine Immacolata, aiutateci! (Immaculate Virgin, Help Us!)*

PARISH OFFICE: When we began renovations at the parish two years ago, we were made aware that the Church would be renovated and plumbing, lighting, and electrical work, would be brought up to code. We were also told that Monsignor Costa Hall (the lower Hall) would be cleaned, repainted, fitted with new windows and modernized. That is almost complete. **The PARISH OFFICE IS NOW LOCATED IN MONSIGNOR COSTA HALL (THE LOWER HALL).** The offices have been moved from both the Rectory and Barn to Monsignor Costa Hall. Thus, everything will be in one place: the secretary/receptionist/office manager Mrs. Deb Cosentino, the Office of Faith Formation (Mrs. Louise Shannon), the Office of the Pastoral Associate/ Business Manager (Deacon Raymond P. D'Alessio, and the Office of the Pastor (Monsignor Pereda). This will be easier for all our parishioners in that there is only one place to go for any parish business (Mass cards, Sacramental Forms, Sacramental Preparation, marriage arrangements, etc.) The Rectory will simply be the Residence and Home of the Priest. This is a great grace for me, as it will be for my successors. This arrangement will also guarantee greater security and protection for both our staff and parishioners in these difficult times. This will take some getting used to, but in the many parishes where this has been done, it has always been of great advantage to everyone

Monsignor Costa hall still has many classrooms for the use of our children, as well as a conference room, and a music room for our Director of Music and choir rehearsals.

In Jesus and Mary,
Monsignor James F. Pereda