

Feast of Christ the King 2020

My beloved brothers and sisters, in today's Gospel, Jesus makes an unambiguous and unobscured statement about His identity and universal authority: He tells us that He is the eternal judge and holds in His hands the eternal destiny of every man and every nation of all of time. He tells us that is the absolute Lord and King of the entire universe, all of history, and of eternity itself. Either He is who He claims to be, or He is a complete madman, a lunatic who is completely out of touch with reality. There is no other option; however, if we take the Gospels and the History of the Church seriously, then we have to say that His claims as Universal Lord, Son of God must be true, because no other institution could have survived the intrigue, wickedness of its members and incompetence of its leaders. And, despite these things, His Church has also been a source of wisdom, holiness, beauty and culture throughout history. Therefore, we must answer the single most important question in all of human history: "What do you say about the Christ?"

The way that we answer this question and the way that we respond in living out its conclusions makes all of the difference in our eternity: an eternity in His eternal life, or an eternity of hell, or an eternal nothingness.

The Lord Jesus makes the claim that He will come again to judge the "living and the dead"; we affirm this belief every single Sunday in the Creed. In the Gospel, Jesus helps us to understand the eternal dilemma: In the first group of people, the ones He beckons into heaven, He says: "Come, you who are blessed by my Father..." However, in the second group, the ones who enter eternal punishment, which is hell, He says to them: "Depart from me you accursed ones..." How can we reconcile an infinitely loving God of infinite Mercy, with the idea of eternal punishment?

Notice: with the first group, they are blessed by God and lived that blessedness in their care and love of their brothers and sisters, the poorest of the poor. In the second group, they were no less blessed by the Father; however, they chose to live their lives egocentrically, centered upon themselves. By their lives, they did not give and share what they had and by doing so, refused to live the blessedness that

God has chosen for each of us. God did not send them to hell; rather, they entered a hell of their own making—they chose to live in selfishness rather than to live in self-giving, which is the very meaning of love in the New Testament and the Old. They created a living hell rather than accepting and living their blessedness! Jesus is the eternal God and King, the infinitely merciful and just Lord. He sees the truth and judges according to the truth, because He is the way, the truth and the life.

How do we live blessedness? by living lives of self-giving, first to God and then for our neighbor. If we are daily submitting our lives to the Lordship of Jesus over us, we live in His Blessedness; on the other hand, if we refuse to live our lives under His Lordship over us, we recreate ourselves in darkness and not in the Light. In this liturgy, let us renew our commitment to submit the whole of our lives to Him as our Divine Lord and master: “Lord Jesus, I surrender to you, I give myself to you, I abandon myself to you, who has surrendered yourself to me, given yourself to me and abandoned yourself to me”, and ask Him for the Grace to live this self-giving for others!