

## Solemnity of Christ the King 2019

My brothers and sisters: throughout history, Kings have called themselves: shepherds. In ancient Egypt, they were depicted with a shepherds crook and a flaggelum, a whip of cords with pieces of metal at the end of each cord. Other kings ruled with an iron rod, and many were depicted with a mace, a war club made of copper or bronze or iron. There were very, very few good kings. Most of them were tyrants who had the absolute power of life and death over their subjects. On the other hand, today we celebrate the King of Love, who rules, not with a mace or flaggelum, but from the powerlessness of the Cross. Ancient kings often had a cadre of guards with spears, this King, the Lord Jesus had a cadre of thieves and murderers, on each side, being crucified with Him, one of whom recognizes the True nature of Jesus' Kingship and asks to be remembered by Him when He enters His Kingdom. Jesus exercises the True nature of His Kingship by forgiving the thief and promising: "This day, you shall be with me in paradise!" The True nature of Jesus' Kingship, is not ruthless power, but mercy and forgiveness!

From the perspective of the Cross, this was the pivotal moment of human history: mankind rejects, scorns and destroys the Creator in the Flesh, and He does not resist; and by not resisting, Christ reigns forever by His mercy. The moment of His death is eternal, and now He reigns as eternal mercy. His judgement is not to call legions of Angels to come to His defense, but to proclaim: "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do!" This is the great paradox and the great scandal of the Cross: utter defeat, is utter victory over sin and death! The throne of Jesus' Kingship, is the unconquerable throne of God's power of unconditional love for each one of us. The Cross of Jesus reveals the True nature of His life; and it is in His death the pagan centurion proclaims: "Truly, this was the Son of God!"

It is in the Resurrection in His glorified body, that He reveals to us His unconquerable power as Lord and God- this is the witness of the eleven, and especially Thomas, who proclaims: "My Lord and my God!" That witness comes from seeing the still open wounds on His Body. Jesus invites us to believe in His Kingship of Love: "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe!" This is

our hope, sinful men and women that we are hope, sinful men and women that we are, Lord Jesus Christ, King of Mercy, I trust in you! Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy!

Today, there are many who still refuse to believe, even at the highest levels of the Church. Today, let us reaffirm: Lord Jesus Christ, King of Mercy, I trust in you!