



Kin-dom not Monarchy: A Pastoral Letter for Christ the King Sunday

Beloved in Christ,

Grace and peace to you!

As we come to the close of the Christian year and prepare to enter Advent, we pause on this Christ the King Sunday to proclaim that Jesus Christ reigns. Yet his reign is unlike any earthly ruler we have ever known. His throne is the cross, his crown is of thorns, and his power is love poured out for the world. To declare Christ as King, therefore, is to dethrone every idol of power—wealth, violence, extremism, and empire.

All throughout scriptures, we are warned of the dangers of domination and authoritarianism, echoing this time-proven truth: that no human ruler should hold ultimate power. Christ's reign is not about domination at all—it is about justice, humility and solidarity with the marginalized. His authority is compassion, his sovereignty is mercy, and his kingdom is shared life.

And so, to proclaim Christ is King, we must speak clearly against the rising tide of Christian nationalism, which seeks to merge faith with political control, distorting the gospel into a tool of exclusion and supremacy, rather than a vessel of liberation and belonging. Christ the King Sunday is a direct rebuke to this distortion. Jesus does not sanctify flags or borders; he gathers all peoples into one body. His reign is not about elevating one nation above another, but about reconciling all of creation in love.

Christ the King Sunday is also a hinge between seasons. As we proclaim Christ's reign, we turn toward Advent, a season of waiting and preparation. We do not await a conquering monarch, but a child born in vulnerability. We prepare not for domination, but for incarnation. God comes not as king of armies, but as Emmanuel—God with us, whose reign is characterized by hope, peace, joy, and love.

John Wesley reminds us: "Whosoever will reign with Christ in heaven, must have Christ reigning in him on earth." And the hymn writer proclaims: "Jesus shall reign where'er the sun does its successive journeys run; his kingdom stretch from shore to shore, till moons shall wax and wane no more."

This is the vision we hold: Christ's reign is not bound by borders, but stretches across creation. To celebrate Christ the King is to resist every false enthronement—whether nationalism, authoritarianism, or idolatry of self. It is to prepare our hearts for Christ's reign by living as kin, not as subjects. And so we proclaim: No kings but Christ—and Christ's reign is not monarchy but kin-dom, a shared life of love.

May this season strengthen us to reject the crowns of empire and nationalism, and to embrace the reign of love where the King comes not in power, but in vulnerability, and calls us to live as kin in God's beloved community.

May it be so.


Bishop Carlo A. Rapanut

Study Resource from the Council of Bishops: [Building Beloved Community: The Courage to Love in the Face of Tyranny](#)

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