



# NEWSLETTER

20 NOV 2022. FEAST OF CHRIST THE KING.

A PARISH OF THE MULLINGAR DEANERY

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The Community of St. Camillus 044 9374115.

## ST. JOSEPH'S, RATHWIRE.

Saturday 19<sup>th</sup>, 6pm. Maisie Brilley MM.

Sunday 20<sup>th</sup>, 11.30am. Sean Heffernan MM. Patty Keegan MM. Andrew, Ellen & Philesta McNally.

Saturday 26<sup>th</sup>, 6pm. Tom Bray. William, Eillen, Seamus & Peg Leech.

Sunday 27<sup>th</sup>, 11.30am. Noreen Whyte.

## ST. BRIGID'S, RAHARNEY.

Sunday

**Weekday Masses;** Raharney Tues 9am. Rahtwire Fri 9am.

MASS OFFERTORY COLLECTION: €517  
PARISH DEVELOPMENT FUND €495

Adoration  
of the  
Blessed Sacrament



In St. Joseph's Tuesday 1pm-9pm.  
& St. Brigid's Wed. 5pm-10pm:  
Special Diocesan intention of prayer  
for vocations and the family.  
**Take one Hour with the Lord**

**Charity shop:** at Rathwire church opens Tues, Thurs & Fri 11am – 1pm.

**Parish Mass of Remembrance;** to especially remember those from the parish who died during the last year, will take place on Sun 27<sup>th</sup> at 11.30am in Rathwire.

## An Upside-Down Kingdom

Today's liturgy presents us with two perspectives on Christ the King. The first is Jesus Christ, the King of the universe, Christ, the King of all creation, "he who is the beginning, the first-born of the dead, so that primacy may be his in everything" (Col 1:18). The other perspective on Jesus is the one inscribed over his head as he hung on the cross: *This is the King of the Jews*.

Jesus is King of the Jews. Who were, and are, the Jews? They were the slaves of Egypt. They were the captives of Babylon. They were the despised people on the fringe of the Roman Empire. Down the centuries, they have been the landless outcasts of Christian Europe.

In our own time, they were the declared enemy of the "master race," which hounded, tortured, and brutally killed them. And Jesus is their King!

Christ the King rules from a throne made to execute criminals. His Kingdom is a place of death outside the city. His subjects are the poor and outcast, the rejected of this world. In this upside-down Kingdom, it is not the executor but the executed who will be with Christ in paradise

What Jesus proclaims by word, he enacts in his ministry. ... His mighty works symbolize that the reign of God is more powerful than evil, sickness, and the hardness of the human heart.

He offers God's loving mercy to sinners, takes up the cause of those who suffered religious and social discrimination, and attacks the use of religion to avoid the demands of charity and justice.

U.S. Bishops, [\*Economic Justice for All\*](#), 1987

*Opening Session of the Diocesan Inquiry of  
THE CAUSE OF THE BEATIFICATION AND CANONISATION OF THE SERVANT OF GOD, FATHER WILLIAM DOYLE SJ  
following Vespers for the Solemnity of Christ the King, at the Cathedral of Christ the King, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath,  
on Sunday 20th November 2022 at 5pm.*

# Sunday Message

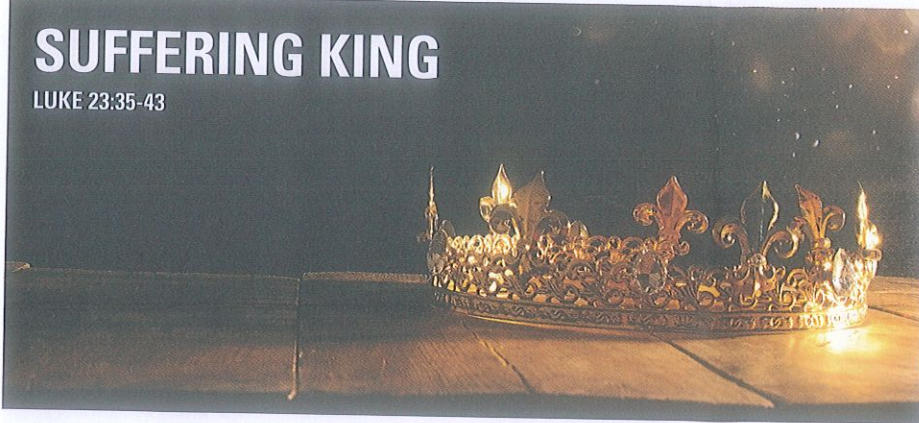
Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe

THE WORD

Year C • 20 November 2022 • Season Colour: White • Psalter Week 2

## SUFFERING KING

LUKE 23:35-43



One of the most popular books and TV series of modern times is *Game of Thrones*. With a magnificent plot and glorious cinematography, the drama has all the elements fans seem to love – greed, ambition, lust, brutality, power struggles, betrayal, intrigue. ‘Game’ is an appropriate word for its title, for there are power games aplenty, games of thrones.

Humanity has always been fascinated by royalty. Think of the popularity of the Netflix series, *The Crown*, or people’s obsession with the British royal family.

In times past, kings and queens were closer to the image portrayed on *Games of Thrones* than the royal houses of today. Absolute monarchs ruled by decree. They commanded respect, fear, obedience. They fought battles and conquered territory and lorded it over their subjects. They got rid of anyone who got in their way. Their wealth and power afforded them the luxury and lifestyle their subjects could only dream of.

Thankfully, this isn’t the case anymore (at least in the West), so we can find it hard to understand why we celebrate a feast of Christ as king. The Jesus of the Gospels, the carpenter’s boy from Nazareth, doesn’t fit our image of a monarch. It’s essential, then, to remember how and why this feast came about.

Pope Pius XI inaugurated it in 1925 during a time of increasing political turmoil. The Blackshirts under Mussolini were in power in Italy. A demagogue called Adolf Hitler was organising the Nazi Party in Germany. In Moscow, Josef Stalin was ruthlessly consolidating his control of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The world was tumbling toward the Great Depression, and populism and militant nationalism were on the rise. In creating this feast, Pope Pius was declaring to the world that despite dictatorships and economic collapse and the false values of the time, Jesus Christ remained King of the Universe and a model for how authority should be exercised.

Pius XI was declaring that in a world filled with division, conflict and tears, Christ the King offers both the ideal example and an uncomfortable model of behaviour. He is the model for how authority should be exercised. He is the model for how people should relate to one another.

The kingship of Jesus turns our commonly accepted notions of royalty on their head. His crown symbolises his majesty, made not of gold but thorns. He rules not by threat or decree but by a moral authority, a message of love. He is interested not in possessions, money or status but mercy, compassion and justice. Our king rules by washing feet.

In the midst of the humiliation of the cross, today’s Gospel account paints a picture of someone every inch a king. Jesus pardons his executioners; he bestows the gift of the kingdom on someone who has done little to merit it until that moment. In the act of dying, he calmly resigns his Spirit into the hands of God. ■

### PRAY

Pray for our leaders of church and state that what they do and how they live will reflect kingdom values of service, humility and love.

### DO

Think about your values. How closely do they reflect the values of the kingdom?

### REFLECT

Jesus’ model of authority is what Pope Francis seeks to demonstrate. It has been a hallmark of his papacy since the night he first appeared on the balcony in St Peter’s almost a decade ago. People noticed it straight away – how he wore only the simple white cassock and black shoes, how he refused to live in the spacious papal apartments, how he shuns ostentation and has kept the focus on simplicity. They noted how his first trip outside Italy was not to visit a head of state or major shrine but to a Mediterranean island swamped with refugees.

Pope Francis’ message is clear – we must imitate Jesus by living as simply and humbly as possible. Whatever our rank in society or the church, we must never lord it over anyone. Our model must always be Christ, the servant king.

This is a tough ask because it runs counter to the values of today, which are about celebrity and wealth and power. To be a follower of the servant king is to live a life at odds with the prevailing culture. It is to be a counter-witness.

The feast of Christ the King also has a new urgency today, with right-wing populism again on the rise and narrow tribalism dominating so much of politics. It reminds us that God’s kingdom is different from any earthly kingdom, and its values are different. As Christians, we are called to worship Jesus Christ as our king and imitate his way of living. ■

### LEARN

The kingdom of God is based not on power, wealth and military might but justice, peace and love.

The followers of Jesus live by the values of his kingdom.

When we reach out in love and compassion to the lost and forsaken, those in prison, the sick, the homeless, we are living by the values of the kingdom.

### SAY

Lord Jesus, you are my master and my king. Help me to follow your example to the best of my ability. Amen.