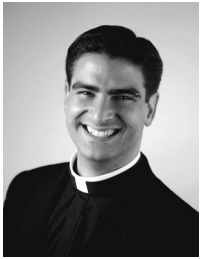


NOVEMBER 25 & 26, 2023



Dear Friends in Christ,

Few of us have been subject to a king, and the few kings left in the world do not have the power over their subjects' lives that a king in the Ancient Near East or the Roman Empire had. It is not surprising, then, that when Jews of that time imagined what it would be like for God to finally take complete control of the world, they used imagery of kingship and of great battles between good and evil. The most powerful use of that language, however, made its point by turning typical ideas of kingship on their head, as our readings today show.

In the first reading, Ezekiel sees that eventually the devastating reigns of Israel's recent kings, as well as the kings of other nations who conquered Israel, would come to an end. God will be their king, but his reign will be not of pomp and majesty but of the kindest of shepherds, tenderly giving care to the most vulnerable of the flock.

For Paul, Christ's resurrection signaled that the end times had begun, and very soon, he thought, Christ will reign as king. But again, he will be a king far different than the Jews were experiencing under the Roman emperors. Christ the King will bring not more money and prestige to the rich, but life eternal to those who belong to him. He promises just judgment, both for them and for those who have oppressed them.

The Gospel tells us how to belong to Christ. Jesus' parable of the sheep and the goats continues the theme of the messianic king who will judge justly. In the Roman Empire, honor was everything and money was able to buy you that. Money also bought what could only roughly be called "justice." It is not money or power or worldly honor that gains one admittance to Jesus' kingdom, however – it is acting like God, the Good Shepherd, who binds up the injured and heals the sick. To be with him and in him, Christ the King chooses quite simply those who give food, drink, clothing, and comfort to those most neglected.

It is a topsy-turvy kingdom, this reign of Christ, compared to the values of the wider society, both in ancient times and in our time. Choosing Christ's kingdom is an act of both exceptional bravery and extreme humility. May we never fail to choose his kingdom, to allow Christ to be sovereign in our lives.

Yours in Christ Jesus,
Fr. Marco

PRAYER CHAIN The Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Shrine has a prayer line where you can talk and pray with someone over the phone. The prayer line is open Monday through Friday from 10 am to 5 pm. Call 1-866-202-4934.

EVENTS CALENDAR

November 27 — December 3	
Mon:	All Day 6:30 pm 7 pm
Fri:	9 am 5:30 pm
Sat:	9 am
Parish Office Closed Confession Begins Mass w/Healing Prayers First Friday Mass and Confession First Friday Mass and Confession First Saturday Mass/Confession	

PARISH OFFICE CLOSED On Monday, November 27.



DECK THE HALL! The Immaculate Heart of Mary Tree Raising and Hall Decorating Party will be Saturday, December 2 from 5 pm to 9 pm. Please bring your favorite dessert as we decorate the hall and enjoy Christmas Cheer with our Parish Family while preparing the Hall for the Christmas Season, Our Lady of Guadalupe celebration, Santa's Visit, and the celebration of the Birth of our Lord. Light refreshments will be provided. Contact Tony Spadarella at tojo8181@gmail.com if you plan to attend.

IHM YOUTH CHRISTMAS CHOIR Want to sing with the angels at the 5 pm Christmas Eve Mass and the play starting at 4:30 pm beforehand? All the children of the parish are welcome to join the choir for the Pageant and the Mass. There will be rehearsals on Sunday, December 3 and Sunday, December 17 at 3 pm. Dress rehearsal is on Friday, December 22 at 5:30 pm. Contact Mary at 240-434-8876 or mary@ihmrcc.org. You can also sign up on the list by the Music Room Office in the hallway. Parents, please leave good contact information.

MASS WITH HEALING PRAYERS This month's Mass with Healing Prayers is at 7 pm on Monday, November 27. After Mass, we will have Eucharistic Adoration and prayers for healing with laying on of hands. Confessions begin at 6:30 pm and continue as long as there are penitents.

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT We are seeking volunteers to assist with and actors to participate in with this year's Children's Christmas Pageant on Christmas Eve. If interested, call the Children's Faith Formation office at 301-863-8793 or Kayla Krause at 412-477-9115. Following are the dates for the pageant:

December 3 at 3:00 pm, Role and Costume assignments
December 17 at 3:00 pm, Rehearsal
December 22 at 5:30 pm, Dress rehearsal
December 24 at 4:30 pm, Christmas pageant

SOLEMNTIY OF JESUS, KING OF THE UNIVERSE

MASS Intentions

November 27 — December 3

Monday	Dn 1:1-6, 8-20/Dn 3:52, 53, 54, 55, 56/ Lk 21:1-4
9:00 am	All Departed Souls
7:00 pm	All Departed Souls
Tuesday	Dn 2:31-45/Dn 3:57, 58, 59, 60, 61/ Lk 21:5-11
5:30 pm	All Departed Souls
Wednesday	Dn 5:1-6, 13-14, 16-17, 23-28/Dn 3:62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67/Lk 21:12-19
9:00 am	All Departed Souls
Thursday	Rom 10:9-18/Ps 19:8, 9, 10, 11/ Mt 4:18-22
10:00 am	All Departed Souls
Friday	Dn 7:2-14/Dn 3:75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81/ Lk 21:29-33
9:00 am	Margaret Brown (D)
5:30 pm	Anna Maria McDowell (D)
Saturday	Dn 7:15-27/Dn 3:82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87/ Lk 21:34-36
9:00 am	Corrine Geraty (D)
4:00 pm	Buck Hewitt (D)
Sunday	Is 63:16B-17, 19B; 64:2-7/Ps 80:2-3, 15-16, 18 -19/1 Cor 1:3-9/MK 13:33-37
8:30 am	Linda Perragoe (L)
11:15 am	Agustus Cadag Averilla (D)
1:00 pm	All IHM Parishioners

FIRST FRIDAY AND FIRST SATURDAY DEVOTIONS The next First Friday Mass is December 1. We will have Mass at 9 am and 5:30 pm. First Saturday Mass is at 9 am on Saturday, December 2. All three Masses will be followed by confessions and Eucharistic Exposition.

MUSIC NOTES This Sunday, The Feast of Jesus Christ King of the Universe, is the last week that we will use the Mass of Renewal service music. We are entering the season of Advent and will be switching to the Chant Mass. You will notice that during this time we will not be singing the Gloria (except for feast days like the Immaculate Conception on Dec 7/8). When we start the season of Christmas, we will switch to the Celtic Mass.

FORMED To sign up for Formed, the premier site to access Catholic Media online, go to www.formed.org and press "sign up" and then enter the ZIP code of the parish "20653", follow the directions to create an account, and then enjoy!

THANK YOU to all who donated turkeys and turkey breasts, as well as all those who volunteered for the preparation and on the day of the Thanksgiving meal. We can only do this community event with the help of everyone. Thank you all once again!

ADDITIONAL THANK YOU to all the volunteers who helped with the planning and execution of our very first Gobble Gallop 5k run. It was exciting to do a new event at the parish! Congratulations to all those who completed the run.

HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION MASS TIMES The Mass times for the **Feast of the Immaculate Conception** are as follows: Thursday, December 7 at 5:30 pm at IHM, Friday, December 8 at 9 am at IHM, 11:35 at St. Nicholas Chapel on Base, and at 7 pm at IHM.

MASS INTENTIONS may be requested at the parish office during regular office hours (M—F, 8 am—4 pm) in person or by phone (301-863-8144 x11), or by e-mailing julian@ihmrcc.org. Your desired date may not be available. We now have the ability to accept Mass intention stipends online (but only **after** the date has been accepted by the office).



PLEASE PRAY

THAT THE SICK MAY BE RESTORED TO FULL HEALTH

Audrey Somers, Kathleen Floyd, Mary Oliver, Jane Kenyon, Linda F. Gieser, Ralph Gough Sr., Betty LePore, Joseph, Rylee Corliss, Alan Stapanon, Ruby Garcia, Mia Garcia, Matthew Riddell, Marie C. Williams, Kaylee Klier, Wanda Slater, Enedina Melendez, Hector Perez, Josephine, Glenn Thompson III, John Worrell, Jim Makin, Carmen Colby, Gary Green, Grace Miedzinski, Bruce Riddell, Katelyn Corliss, Robert Weaver, Devlin Rich, Ana Gates, Dennis Berg, Alejandra Spargo, Lisa and Paul Crowe, Adele Bavani, Violette Ghalbouny, Helen Pearson, John Flynn, Michael Briscoe, Patricia A. Louis, Susan Marie Hollis, Norma Jean Jubeck, Melva Coates, Frances Roof, Jayne C., Dcn. Barnes

Please note: names will remain on this list for two months, unless otherwise notified. To keep a name on the list, please resubmit by contacting bulletin@ihmrcc.org, or call the Parish Office.

PAPAL PRAYER INTENTION FOR DECEMBER

We pray that people living with disabilities may be at the center of attention in society, and that institutions may offer inclusive programs which value their active participation.

Follow us on



NOVEMBER 25 & 26, 2023

HOLY WATER (from *Sacred Signs*, by Fr. Romano Guardini, 1927)

Water is a mysterious thing. It is so clear and frictionless, so “modest,” as St. Francis called it. It hardly pretends to any character of its own. It seems to have no other end or object than to be of service, to cleanse what is soiled and to refresh what is dry.

But at some time you must have gazed down into the still depths of a great body of water, and felt it tugging to draw you in, and have got a glimpse of the strange and secret thing water is, and of the marvels, terrors and enticements that lurk in its depths. Or, at another time when it was whipped to a boiling torrent by a storm, you have heard it rushing and roaring, rushing and roaring, and watched the sucking vortex of a whirlpool and felt a force so grim and dreary that you had to tear your thoughts away.

It is indeed a strange element. On the one hand smooth and transparent, as if it hardly existed in its own right, ready at hand to wash away dirt and satisfy thirst; and on the other a restless, foundationless, enigmatic force that entices us on to destruction. It is a proper image for the secret ground-source from which life issues and back into which death recalls it. It is an apt image for this life of ours that looks so clear and is so inexplicable.

It is plain why the church uses water as the sign and the bearer of the divine life of grace. We emerge from the waters of baptism into a new life, born again of water and the Holy Spirit. In those same waters the old man was destroyed and put to death.

With this elemental element, that yields no answer to our questioning, with this transparent, frictionless, fertile fluid, this symbol and means of the supernatural life of grace, we make on ourselves, from forehead to breast, from shoulder to shoulder, the sign of the cross.

By her consecration of it, the Church has freed water from the dark powers that sleep in it. These are not mere words. Anyone whose perceptions have not been blunted must be aware of the enchantment of the natural powers inherent in water. And are they only natural powers? Is there not present also a dark and preternatural power? In nature, for all her richness and beauty, there is something demonic. City life has so deadened our senses that we have lost our perception of it. But the Church knows it is there. She “exorcises” out of water those forces that are at enmity with God. She blesses it and asks God to make of it a vehicle of his grace.

Therefore the Christian, when he enters church, moistens forehead, breast and shoulders, all his person, with the clean and cleansing water in order to make clean his soul. It is a pleasing custom that brings grace and nature freed from sin, and man, who so longs for cleanness, into the unity of the sign of the cross.

At evening, also, we sign ourselves in holy water. Night, as the proverb says, is no friend to man. Our human nature is formed and fashioned for light. Just before we give ourselves over into the power of sleep and darkness, and the light of day and consciousness is extinguished, there is a satisfaction in making the sign of the cross on ourselves with holy water. Holy water is the symbol of nature set free from sin. May God protect us from every form of darkness! And at morning, when we emerge again out of sleep, darkness and unconsciousness, and life begins afresh, we do the same thing. But in the morning, it is to remind ourselves of that holy water from which we have issued into the light of Christ. The soul redeemed and nature redeemed encounter one another in the sign of the cross.



FIRST TUESDAY COFFEE The next First Tuesday Coffee will be held on Tuesday, December 5 from 9 until 11 am in the Parish Hall. Please bring a friend and a non-perishable food item for the Food Pantry.

GRIEVING WITH GREAT HOPE A 5-week, small group workshop to help people grieving the loss of a loved one. The Workshop will be Sundays from 3 pm until 5 pm from January 7th to February 4th, 2024 at St. Aloysius in Leonardtown. For more information, please contact Jennifer Bicknell at 301-475-8064, ext. 11 or jbicknell@saintalloysiuschurch.org. You can sign up online at <https://www.saintalloysiuschurch.org>.

CHURCH CHRISTMAS DECORATING HELP Seeking assistance from family and friends! Join us on Monday, December 18 at 10 am to bring decorations down from the loft, and on Saturday, December 23 at 10 am to decorate the church. Your help makes the process quick and enjoyable. To participate, please reach out to Pat DeCarlo at 240-925-0021 or Linda Hidalgo at 240-298-5264. We look forward to your support!



YOUR VOICES ARE NEEDED If you can read music and like to sing, please consider joining one of our groups that serve the Masses at IHM. The Adult Choir is in need of all voice parts – High School singers welcome! Youth Singers can serve at the 11:15 Mass on the 1st Sunday of the Month. There is also a Men's Choir and a Women's Choir that serve once a month. There are other groups as well! Contact Mary at 240-434-8876.

BULLETIN DEADLINE Please email your submission to bulletin@ihmrcc.org by Wednesday at 10 am prior to the Sunday of publication. All entries are subject to editing.

November 26, 2023

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

The Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe

Ez 34:11-12, 15-17 | 1 Cor 15:20-26, 28 | Mt 25:31-46

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

The paradoxical ways we have come to understand Jesus can give us spiritual whiplash. He is both a tender and caring shepherd of sheep and one who sends strong rams and goats to the eternal fire; the executed human and divine man who came into full resurrected glory. He is God incarnate into human history and born in a manger; the servant-leader; the one who is both God and man. This is the beauty of what we call the Paschal Mystery – that the Son of God came into the world and by his life, death, and resurrection he has reconciled us to the Father, and has redeemed us. He saves us from the death of sin. As Catholics we are comfortable with paradox: We are inhabitants of a kingdom of God that is already (here) but not yet (fully realized); we are both an Easter people and we live in a world of Good Fridays. So when Jesus says in today's Gospel that whatever we do to the least of people, we do to Christ himself and we will reap our actions in the fullness of that kingdom, we understand that he is a king unlike any other king. He cares not for pomp and circumstance, but wants to ensure that all – even the least among us – are given his gifts to share. The Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe celebrates that we have a king who cares more for us than anyone on earth could ever care for us, and we are blessed to be able to love and serve him in return.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

In the midst of our busy lives, it is no secret that our thoughts can easily be preoccupied with things other than prayer or our relationship with God. Perhaps we struggle with maintaining a daily prayer practice. So when we pause to take stock of our lives – where our attention is focused during the day-to-day – it's easy to see that God is sometimes “off to the side.” Perhaps we take everything we have been given for granted, or maybe we are just not sure how to make him the most important aspect of our lives. Just like cultivating a friendship takes active effort, so does our relationship with God. Just as watering a plant near its center allows the water to spread throughout the surrounding area, to its roots and the soil – thus making it fruitful and full – putting Jesus Christ, our king, at the center of our lives means that his goodness flows into everything else we say and do. Our lives and our hearts will grow in goodness and bear rich fruit.

INVITATION Challenge yourself this week to subvert expectations and keep God first. Show Christ is Lord over your life by prioritizing your faith and building up your priorities around him. Make a daily appointment in your calendar for prayer and look for opportunities to put Christ at the center, or heart, of your daily life.

