

HOMILY SUNDAY XXXIV ORDINARY TIME YEAR C
OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, KING OF THE UNIVERSE
JESUS REMEMBER ME WHEN YOU COME INTO YOUR KINGDOM

My dear brothers and sisters... Today is the last Sunday of the liturgical year... and the Church gives us a contrast that always surprises...

Today we celebrate **Christ, King of the Universe**... but we see Him on the Cross... **We don't see Him sitting on a golden throne, nor surrounded by armies of angels giving Him honor**... but nailed to wood, **humiliated, mocked, silenced, seemingly defeated**...

And yet, it is there **right there!** where His true kingship is revealed...

Because Jesus does not reign through force... **but through love that gives itself**...

His power is not measured by victories... **but by mercy**... Jesus does not conquer by defeating enemies, **but by forgiving them**...

While some watch and mock, waiting for a king to come down from the cross to show His power... Jesus shows another way... **the way of love that never abandons... the love that is faithful to the very end**...

The Cross is His throne... and His crown is made of thorns... But those thorns do not symbolize failure, **they symbolize love that does not stop in the face of pain... His power is to love to the extreme**...

And it is there, **in that apparent failure**, where He reveals the true greatness of God... **A greatness that does not crush, but lifts... that does not condemn, but saves**...

Today's Gospel shows everyone mocking Jesus... the soldiers, the leaders, even one of the criminals next to Him...

All seem to see a defeated man... But it was enough that one person looked deeper... **The Good Thief**...

A broken man... marked by his life... without merits, without defenses... **yet he understood everything**... He did not see the exterior, he did not see spectacular miracles, he did not see human power...

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And yet, **he is the only one who recognizes in Jesus a King who can welcome him...**

The repentant thief does not ask for miracles, he does not demand proof... **only from his own pain, from his own broken life**, he makes the most humble and beautiful request... **Remember me...**

Remember me... my dear friends, is the prayer that opens the Kingdom... **That simple prayer is one of the most beautiful prayers in all of Scripture...** Because it comes from humility and truth... **where there is no attempt to negotiate... He does not try to impress...** He only recognizes a need... **Remember me...**

And Jesus' answer is immediate, immense, infinite... **Today you will be with me in Paradise...**

That is our King... **A King who does not ask for credentials... only a sincere heart...**

A King who opens His Kingdom to those who recognize their smallness... **A King whose power is to forgive and whose victory is to embrace human fragility...**

And the good news is that... ***Today you will be with me in Paradise...*** was not only for the Good Thief... That ***today*** is for **all who recognize Jesus as the King who saves from the cross... It is for all who come wounded, tired, repentant, seeking a place in His heart...**

It is for all who, like that man, dare to look at Jesus in the midst of pain and say... **Lord, remember me...**

The second reading helps us see this scene from eternity... St. Paul tells us that Christ is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation, the one through whom and for whom everything exists...

But he also says something deeply comforting... That God wants to bring us with Christ into the Kingdom of light, because in Him we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins...

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The Cross is not Jesus' defeat... it is His way of reigning... **It is the highest moment of His glory...** It is where He reconciles everything... It is where He leads us from darkness into light...

That is why when we look at Jesus crucified, we are not looking at failure, but at the victory of love... The kingship of Jesus is not an idea... **it is an experience...**

It is the experience **of being loved even when we fail... of being sought even when we are lost... of being saved even when we do not deserve it...** It is the **experience of the repentant thief...** and it is also ours...

Today we celebrate that Jesus is King... But not a distant King, a near King... **A King who remembers our name... A King who knows our wounds... A King who is not ashamed of our poverty... A King who lets Himself be nailed for us...** And who, from the cross, keeps saying... **Today... today I want you to be with me...**

My dear brothers and sisters... May this Sunday help us renew our faith in Him... To recognize His presence in all those situations where the world sees nothing divine... but where He continues to reign with the silent strength of love...

And may we ask Him, with the same humble heart as the Good Thief... **Jesus, remember me...** Because we know His answer will always be the same... **Today... today you are with me.**

Fr. Moices Rafael C.