Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)

Christ's favorite topic, it could be argued, was "the Kingdom of God."

* His **first public sermon** began with "The Kingdom of God is at hand," and from then on, he kept talking about it, as in today's Gospel.
* If there is a **Kingdom**, there must also be a **King**, and if there is a King, there must be **subjects**.
* That's how he sees the Church, as a **Kingdom**, not merely as some kind of **club**.

Today we can ask ourselves if that's how **we** see Church.

When we pray, "Thy Kingdom come," do we mean the **same thing** that Jesus meant when he **taught** us that prayer?

* God's Kingdom is the realm where **hearts obey him**out of faith and love.
* The kingdom of **this world** is the realm where hearts **obey themselves**out of self-centeredness, egoism, and fear.
* If we really want to help Christ **redeem** the kingdom of this world by **transforming** it, through his grace, into the **Kingdom of Christ**, we have to keep hearkening to the King and **carrying out** his commands, even when they are **uncomfortable** for our selfish tendencies.

Obeying someone else, though, is almost always a **challenge** for us sinners.

Jesus knows this, and so he doesn't ask us for **blind, mindless** obedience.

* He uses parables to **explain** and **promise** that by following and obeying him, our lives will be **fruitful**.
* The **virtues** that give true, lasting beauty to our lives, that give our lives meaning and deep happiness (virtues like wisdom, courage, self-control, and Christ-like love), are like the **seeds** in the Lord's parables.
* They are planted in our hearts at **baptism**, and as we **follow and obey** Christ in our daily lives, they **grow and flourish**.

Being **good citizens** of Christ's Kingdom is the sure path to an **abundant spiritual harvest** here on earth and forever in heaven.

When challenged with the teachings of Jesus many left him as many do today to follow their own path and understanding. Jesus’ teaching and commands are what they are commands! We need to know them. Like Peter each and every day must say Lord to whom shall we go, you have the words of every lasting life. We know and we believe you are King!

Long live Christ the King!