



FEAST OF CHRIST THE KING

Concerning this feast, Fr. Tom Richstaller, O.F.M. writes:

This feast was established by Pope Pius XI in 1925. Often, in the midst of this world's chaos and questions, we ask "Who is in charge here?" The Feast of Christ the King proclaims that Christ is in charge. Christ reigns as King over all that exists. Yet, again the paradox: his throne is not of gold and silver; he reigns from a cross.

Christ does not embark on this final journey to his kingdom weighed down with suitcases and trunks containing the possessions and acquisitions of his earthly life. Rather, he enters his kingdom naked and helpless, nailed to a cross, surrounded by criminals.

If ever there was optimism in the face of a gray day, hear the words of the criminal who asks "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." (Luke 23:42) He asks for a remembering that is not merely the recalling of a past event, but an effective remembering, a remembering that makes present. "Lord, let me be present with you when you come into your kingdom." It is the effective remembering that we do at Eucharist when we "Do this in memory of me" and experience already here on earth, the banquet of heaven.

This optimism in the face of death roots the spirituality of this season. "In the face of death, the Church confidently proclaims that God has created each person for eternal life and that Jesus, the Son of God, by his death and resurrection, has broken the chains of sin and death that bound humanity." (OCF, 1)

Again, the paradox of letting go and receiving all. Christ emptied himself and was nailed to a cross. "Because of this, God greatly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name." (Philippians 2:9) The Paschal Victory is the icon of our life. All of life is a practice for death—the great letting go.

It's never too late or too early to begin. What are the things in your life that you need to let go of: prejudices, relationships, sins, ideas? We should start letting go now so that death will find us already poor. Then death will not be a great leap into the unknown but simply one more gentle step into the loving embrace of God.

John Carroll the first bishop of the United States.

Those of you who have purchased the new *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*, may have read the following piece on the first bishop of our country—John Carroll. I found it quite interesting and wanted to share it with all of you have not purchased the new catechism. The Catechism writes:

On the Feast of the Assumption in 1790, the first bishop of the United States was ordained. The event occurred in St. Mary's Chapel at the Weld family's ancestral home, Ludworth Castle, in England. The Weld family had been Catholic for centuries, remaining so during and after the Reformation. Bishop Charles Walmsley was the ordaining prelate. Fr. John Carroll of Maryland chose this historic setting for his ordination.

John Carroll was born in 1735 to a wealthy, landowning family in Rock Creek, Maryland. He attended a Jesuit school in St. Omer in France. After his graduation, he entered the Jesuit Order, became a priest, and taught in France at the Order's schools. For most of his young adult life as a Jesuit priest, John Carroll was a teacher of religion and other subjects. After the suppression of the Jesuits in 1773, he became a parish priest and continued his calling to communicate the Gospel through preaching and teaching. His love of teaching endured throughout his life.

At forty years of age, Fr. Carroll returned to his mother's home in Rock Creek, and served as a parish priest there as the mounting conflict between England and the colonies came to a head. Following the Revolutionary War, Fr. Carroll was chosen as the first bishop of Baltimore, Maryland; he set the direction for the Catholic Church in the United States. Bishop Carroll forged a creative role for the Church in a new type of country.

One year after he became a bishop, he convened a synod—a formal meeting of his priests—to address pastoral needs of the diocesan Church and to make sure that the universal practice of the Church was being carried out in the United States. On November 7, 1791, twenty priests assembled at the bishop's house in Baltimore. The first session of the synod dealt with rules for administering Baptism and Confirmation. Another session developed guidelines for the admission of children to their first Holy

Communion. Before receiving the Sacrament, children were expected to have reached the age of reason, to have received full instruction in Christian doctrine, and to have gone to Confession.

The fourth session dealt with the need for priests to receive approval from the bishop to hear confessions. During the fifth session, an extensive discussion was held about pastoral concerns regarding the Sacrament of Matrimony. The synod proved to be a success and received wide-spread praise at home and abroad. The synod's manner of governance helped shape the provincial and plenary councils of Baltimore well into the nineteenth century and beyond. The issues reflected Bishop Carroll's commitment to being an attentive teacher, bishop, and shepherd.

Throughout the years that followed, Bishop Carroll proceeded to influence the establishment of Catholic schools, the institution of religious congregations, and the creation of new dioceses and parishes. He was also effective at organizing his wide-ranging diocese, which included the nation's original thirteen states, the Northwest Territory, and later the vast territory of the Louisiana Purchase. He set the state for the Church's strong community in the United States; he built a firm foundation upon which it could and did grow.

In 1808, on the same day that the Holy Father established the dioceses of Boston and Bardstown, the See of Baltimore was made an archdiocese. As a result, Carroll became the first archbishop in the United States.

During his time as bishop and then archbishop of Baltimore, the uniquely American policy of religious freedom began to take shape. The Declaration of Independence began with a presupposition of faith in God. The first article of the Bill of Rights prohibited Congress from making laws respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise of religion.

Archbishop Carroll died in 1815. Catholicism had made great progress under his twenty-five years of Episcopal leadership. The number of Catholics increased four times over. The number of clergy to serve them doubled. Archbishop Carroll established three seminaries for the training of priests, three colleges for men, and several academies for women. With his encouragement, St. Elizabeth Seton's Sisters of Charity spread throughout the East Coast and onto the frontier.

Daily Devotional for our next Liturgical Year.

Next weekend we begin a new liturgical year and we will have on sale a Daily Devotional for the whole next liturgical year beginning with the first the first Sunday of Advent. This Daily Devotional called *Action 2000* by Mark Link S.J. would make an excellent gift for a family member living elsewhere or for one who no longer attends church. Two samples:

[Jesus said,] "Not everyone who calls me 'Lord, Lord' will enter the Kingdom of heaven, but only those who do what my Father in heaven wants them to do." Matthew 7:21

Barbara Arnstein says she got a call from a cabdriver who told her that she had left her purse in his taxi. When she picked it up-with nothing missing from it-she was so delighted that she offered him a reward. He refused, saying, "Just let me know how much money you had in your purse." Somewhat puzzled, she told him. He pulled out a tiny notebook and recorded the amount, saying, "I'm keeping tab on how much it's costing me to be honest."

The cabdriver does what Jesus says we must do. We must do more than simply pay lip service to God. We must do what God wants us to do. How much is my honesty costing me?

Honesty pays, but not enough to suit some people.

Sample Two

[Jesus said,] "Ask, and you will receive; seek, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened." Matthew 7:7

Maury Wills won't forget his first day in a big-league tryout camp. At the end of the day the coach told him "Go back home! Forget about big-league baseball. You're too small." Maury didn't go home, and he didn't forget about baseball. For eight years he worked long and hard in the minor leagues. "I was close to quitting a hundred times," he said, "but I always stuck it out." The Dodgers finally gave Maury a chance in 1959. In 1962, Maury hit .299, stole a record 104 bases, and beat out such stars as Willie Mays for the National League's Most Valuable Player award.

What keeps me going when I'm put down and feel like quitting?

If you only knock long enough... you are sure to wake up someone. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Wisdom From Grandpa

- I've gotten to the age where I need my false teeth and hearing aid before I can ask where I left my glasses.
- I was just sitting here thinking how nice it is that wrinkles don't hurt.
- If I'd known I was going to get this old, I would have taken better care of myself.
- The golden years: when actions creak louder than words.

Have a blessed week,

