



# Bringing Home the Word

Our Lord Jesus Christ,  
King of the Universe, November 22, 2015

## Jesus Is the One

By Janel Esker

**A**t this time next year, our country will have elected a new president. Though I don't know what the results will be, I'm certain that whether your candidate wins or loses, many will be relieved that the endless speeches, appearances, and phone calls are over. It's exhausting to hear people endlessly promote themselves, whether it's for school board president or leader of the free world. We all grow weary of empty promises, lists of accomplishments, and often-false humility.

In contrast, today's readings invite us to reflect on Jesus' kingship. Jesus—the one in whom many candidates claim

deep faith—is crowned our ultimate leader, our king, in heaven. Yet his leadership is quite different from that of our politicians. The Book of Revelation claims he is “the one who is and who was and who is to come, the almighty.” He's not in it only for four or eight years, after which he'll retire to a comfortable home with book deals and speaking engagements. Jesus' kingship is everlasting—he'll never falter, fail, or flip-flop.

Revelation also claims “every eye will see him, even those who pierced him.” Unlike our candidates, whose rhetoric divides the country, Jesus brings people together. And he certainly didn't know our rules for self-promotion. Instead of claiming the title of king, he continually points to his Father and their intimate connection.

We're probably used to thinking of Jesus as our Savior, our friend, our brother. But it's good to spend time this week pondering him as king. He's a profoundly different kind of leader than any president, congressman, prime minister, or member of parliament. And for this, during the month when we celebrate Thanksgiving, we can be deeply grateful. †

## Sunday Readings

### Daniel 7:13–14

“His dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not pass away.”

### Revelation 1:5–8

“Behold, he is coming amid the clouds, and every eye will see him...”

### John 18:33–37

“[Jesus said,] For this I was born and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth.”

## A Word From Pope Francis

**C**hrist is at the center, Christ is the center.

Christ is the center of creation, Christ is the center of his people and Christ is the center of history... Besides being the center of creation and the center of reconciliation, Christ is the center of the people of God. Today, he is here in our midst.



—Homily, November 24, 2013

## PRAYER

Lord, I am grateful that you are the way, the truth, and the life.

Help me to be faithful to the truth of the Gospel.

—From *Grateful Meditations for Every Day in Ordinary Time*,

Rev. Warren J. Savage and Mary Ann McSweeney

# Look Who's Coming to Dinner!

By Rick Potts, CSsR

In biblical times, meals were governed not only by local custom but also by religious laws that dictated who could eat what with whom and when and where they were to eat it. Throughout the Bible, meals are not only significant events, they often are also teaching moments. In our hurried lives today, meals can become more about consumption than fellowship. Yet every year we fuss over one particular meal when we gather not only with immediate family but with other relatives and friends. We come together to feast and give thanks for our blessings.

The holidays are usually joyous, but when we picture the people gathered around our table, or perhaps the people who *aren't*, there is always one we would just as soon not invite: the cousin with whom we have been feuding for years, the in-law we have never considered “family,” and the uncle who always embarrasses everyone. We wish some would show up but they never do, and others we conveniently forget to invite but they come anyway. And let's not forget the inevitable argument over who ate the last piece of pumpkin pie.

Jesus used meals to mark significant moments and to teach his disciples valuable lessons. However, he was not very picky about those with whom he ate. In fact, Jesus went out of his way to invite the “wrong sort” of people to dine with him; this was one reason he got into trouble. But repeatedly it was the simple act of breaking bread with someone that



## REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- What keeps me from telling and living the truth?
- How can I see Christ the King in others?

produced profound transformation. Jesus was about the business of receiving and restoring people—not rejecting those seeking salvation.

It was Zacchaeus' encounter with Jesus and the Lord's proclamation that he was going to break bread with him that transformed Zacchaeus. The disciples who had lost hope and were returning to Emmaus recognized Jesus only in the breaking of bread. And at the Last Supper, the most important meal of all, Jesus broke bread with those who would

abandon and deny him; he even shared a dish with his betrayer. Yet 2,000 years later, we still argue over who should be sitting at *the Lord's* table.

We are all sinners, and if we are honest, we'd probably admit that we have done things that might give others pause before inviting us to dinner. Thankfully, none of this matters to Jesus, and he continues to invite us to his table. Because Jesus forgives and restores us, forgiveness and restoration must be our charge too. There is absolutely *NO* room for any Christian to reject any child of God. Our command is to go forth and bring the rest of the nations to the Lord. How can we do this if we constantly judge others as unworthy? Quoting a friend who used a common saying, “Nowhere are the people of God more divided than on Sunday morning.”

So who are you inviting to Thanksgiving dinner? More pointedly, who haven't you invited? Maybe it's someone who wronged you; how many times are we to forgive again? Maybe it's political ideology or religious persuasion; is there not one Lord of all? Maybe it's an ethnic group or particular lifestyle choice; are we not all created in the image of God?

Think about your own power to heal and restore people simply by breaking bread with them. Imagine the potential transformation wrought simply by imitating Jesus. Take hope that you can advance the kingdom by swallowing your pride before gulping down some turkey. This year let us restore this meal to its original purpose and give thanks for *all* the people in our lives.

## WEEKDAY READINGS

November 23–28

Mon.	Weekday: <i>Daniel 1:1–6, 8–20 / Luke 21:1–4</i>	Thu.	Weekday: <i>Daniel 6:12–28 / Luke 21:20–28</i>
Tue.	<i>St. Andrew Disciple and Companions: Daniel 2:31–45 / Luke 21:5–11</i>	Fri.	Weekday: <i>Daniel 7:2–14 / Luke 21:29–33</i>
Wed.	Weekday: <i>Daniel 5:1–6, 13–14, 16–17, 23–28 / Luke 21:12–19</i>	Sat.	Weekday: <i>Daniel 7:15–27 / Luke 21:34–36</i>