

# Reflections for Sunday, November 23, 2014

## Christ the King

### Meditation and Questions for Reflection or Group Discussion

(Ezekiel 34:11-12,15-17; Psalm 23:1-3,5-6; 1 Corinthians 15:20-26,28; Matthew 25:31-46)

## Jesus Christ, *A King Like No Other*

*Whatever you did for one of the least brothers of mine, you did for me. (Matthew 25:40)*

What do you think of when you think of a king? A regal throne? Valiant knights? A luxurious lifestyle? How about a shepherd? How about someone who spends his time “in the fields” taking care of his subjects and risking his life for his people?

The shepherd was a common image the prophets used to remind Israel’s kings of their calling. They preached that being a king wasn’t about wielding power or increasing wealth. It was about serving the people and taking special care of the neediest among them.

When Jesus spoke of his Second Coming, he used the image of a shepherd to describe the kind of ruler he was going to be and the kind of kingdom he was going to establish. He wants a kingdom where people care for the most vulnerable: the hungry, the thirsty, the sick, the homeless, and the forgotten. He wants his citizens to treat these “poor ones” just as they would treat him.

This emphasis on caring for the poor is at the heart of Catholic social teaching. According to this body of doctrine, Jesus, our King, doesn’t want any of his people to be without food, clothing, and shelter. Those who have more should care for those who have less. They should lift up the lowly and help establish a world where justice and peace take priority over profit and gain.

Every human being is created by God and has been redeemed by Jesus. This means that every person has great dignity and should be treated as the treasure he or she is. Poverty, homelessness, abandonment—they all inflict deep wounds on a person’s soul. Let’s do everything we can to reverse these conditions! Let’s make it a point to see Christ, our King, in all people, rich or poor, and to treat them with the dignity they deserve.

*“Lord, teach us to stand up for the poor and forgotten. Help us follow your example of love and service.”*

(Many thanks to *The Word Among Us* ([www.wau.org](http://www.wau.org)) for allowing us to use meditations from their monthly devotional magazine. Used with permission. *The Word Among Us* Mass Edition contains all the Mass readings and prayers, and a meditation for each of the daily and Sunday Masses.)

**Sunday, November 23, 2014**

***Questions for Reflection or Group Discussion***

1. In the first reading, God describes himself as a shepherd watching over us, his flock. He also promises to rescue the scattered, seek the lost, bring back the strayed, bind up the injured, and heal the sick. While we may find it more difficult in today's world to relate to this pastoral metaphor, we can nevertheless still be touched by the degree of care expressed by God toward us. As the shepherd of your family, how would you describe your role? In what way is it to mirror God's care for you and to be a witness of a life conformed to Jesus our Shepherd King?
2. The responsorial psalm continues the metaphor of the "Lord is my shepherd" and once again describes his great care for his sheep. Since we, as Christians, are one of the sheep being described, how faithful are you in allowing Jesus to guide you in "right paths"? What needs to change?
3. In the second reading, St. Paul describes Christ as risen and reigning. What specific steps could you take to increase Christ's reign in your heart, in your family, in you Parish, or where you work?
4. In the Gospel, Christ lets us know exactly the things that are of interest to him at his second coming. Of course, we all want to be the sheep on his right and not the goats on his left. We all want to hear these words from Jesus, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Which two of the actions he describes for the sheep on his right are you willing to commit to in the upcoming weeks, and perhaps as Advent and Christmas promises to the Lord?
5. The meditation opens with this Scripture: "*Whatever you did for one of the least brothers of mine, you did for me. (Matthew 25:40)*" How would you describe the "least brothers" of Jesus, especially in light of knowing that Jesus our King places so much importance on you and I serving the "least of my brothers"?
6. Take some time now to pray for the grace to stand up for the poor and forgotten, and to follow the example of Jesus' love and service. Use the prayer at the end of the meditation as the starting point.

[The discussion questions were created by Maurice Blumberg, a director of partner relations for **The Word Among Us Partners**, (<http://www.waupartners.org/>), a ministry of **The Word Among Us** ([www.wau.org](http://www.wau.org)) to the Military, Prisoners, and women with crisis pregnancies or who have had abortions. Maurice was also the founding Executive Director of the **National Fellowship of Catholic Men** (<http://www.nfcmusa.org/>), for which he is currently a Trustee. He can be contacted at [mblumberg@wau.org](mailto:mblumberg@wau.org) or [mblumberg@aol.com](mailto:mblumberg@aol.com)].