

Pius XI: In response to the rise of

Our Father...

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done.

Mufassa and Simba: Remember who you are!

Great advice—greater theology!

Ee cummings

Pius instituted this feast in _____ because Xians forgot who they were.
The leaders at the time and those who were being led by them.

Our world is similar today.

If we remembered who were were:

Dems and Reps

Bps.

Xians

Parents

Children

...Our Father

Remember who you are!

Lion King

X the King

Our world: Pope Pius got political!

Jesus' world

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Christ the King at Our Lady Queen of Peace

I recently was talking with my niece Elizabeth about her favorite movie, *The Lion King*. As a seven-year-old, she really has a passion for this film. She went on to tell me that it is about Mufasa and Simba, a father lion and his lion son, and the elder's efforts to pass on his kingdom to his progeny. Elizabeth was able to go on about how the bad lion tried to take over the jungle, but had no luck. "Goodness always wins over badness, Uncle Kevin," she said. She went on to tell me that the older lion would always give his son the same advice: "Remember who you are. He kept on saying it: Remember who you are," she said.

Good advice. Even better theology!

Today's feast of Christ the King emerges out of a time in our Church when Pope Pius XI thought that we Christians forgot who we were. He declared this feast in 1925 when the world's leaders and the people they were leading were falling under the throes of fascism, socialism, communism, and even capitalism. Pius wanted the world to know that the political forces of the day were inadequate, even dangerous, and we needed to reorient our way of living.

To live in a world where Christ is King is to live in a world where never forget who we are: We are brothers and sisters. All equal, all hungry for something: whether food, affection, healing, or hope: We are all needy people, and we are responsible for meeting each other's needs. Pius realized that no political system could accomplish this type of Kingdom; it wasn't a political system that Jesus sought to establish. Rather, it was a way of life, and this was the reminder that is at the heart of this feast. That we never forget who we are.

The political systems of the first quarter of the last century indeed failed. And the political systems of the beginnings of this century are still failing. People throughout our world still starve, have little to no freedom, and live under the oppression of various economic systems—even in our own country. Have we once again forgotten who we are? Is this feast a timely reminder of our Christian identity and our moral and political responsibility to care for each other?

This feast comes after our recent election. Perhaps it is best this way, for our power to care for our world goes beyond how we are voting. In the Kingdom which Christ leads, there are no red or blue pews. We tend to one side of the aisle here at OLQP because of custom or comfort, not ideology or vision. In fact, it goes to the heart of how we are living. From our care for the environment, our use of energy, our generosity to the poor, our attitudes around race and gender, and a commitment to global citizenship that parallels or even surpasses our national citizenship. With a perspective that is larger than just our own family, city, country, or Church, the war in Darfur is as much our war as is the one in Iraq, the near-schism conflict in the Episcopal church calls forth our

prayers, and the on-going recovery in New Orleans is still our responsibility, even though Katrina has past her first birthday.

Yet, how do we do it all? After all, we at OLQP do a fine job of caring for others. Our MT 25 ministry continues to occupy the prime real estate of our parish ministry building. Our outreach to our sister parish in Haiti is at a daily prayer request, and we are indeed generous. And, our social justice ministry keeps countless issues before us. How much more can we take on? Good question, but remember the good advice and better theology: Remember who you are! Perhaps the best thing that we do for each other here at Church is not set up programs and ministries, but to use them to help us remember who we are. Perhaps this is a great protection against a growing global amnesia that becomes the most powerful weapon of mass destruction: Humanity just forgets who we are.

The poet ee cummings said it best:

“To be nobody-but-yourself -- in a world which is doing its best, night and day, to make you everybody else -- means to fight the hardest battle which any human being can fight; and never stop fighting.”

Jesus knew this struggle perhaps best of all. In today's dialogue between him and Pilate, we see a Roman leader trying to box our Savior into a category and identity that just wasn't his: He was no King as his own world knew him. He was a King of the world his Father sent him to save with his gentleness, peace, justice, and reconciliation. Jesus never stopped fighting this battle, right unto the cross from which he still reigns for us.

After the battles of apartheid, Archbishop Desmond Tutu was asked if he ever thought of giving up. He simply picked up his Bible and pointed to it. He said, “No, because I read this book to the end, and we win.” When Christ is our King, and we choose to live in his Kingdom, our triumph is assured. So is our brothers' and sisters'.

Perhaps every day of our lives, we pray the Our Father. In it we make two profound assertions at the beginning and the end. The first two words make us all equal: How we should live. The closing sentence: “Thy kingdom come, they will be done on earth as it is in heaven:” tells us how we will live.

Today's feast simply asks us: How are we living now? In a few moments we shall pray about this Kingdom:

“A kingdom of truth and life,
a kingdom of holiness and grace,
a kingdom of justice, love, and peace.”

Do we remember that we are the body of Christ, with Christ as our King?