

Christ the King/XX Trinity 2022
Sermon – Saint Joseph Parish
Father Craig Looney
The Kings Highway



Let's go back to Christ the King Day 2007. In the sermon I incorrectly stated the El Camino Real... "The King's Highway"... refers to Christ the King. But El Camino Real really refers to the King of Spain. Any road under his jurisdiction was called a *Camino Real*.

The notable thing about our El Camino Real is the chain of 21 missions founded along its route by Father Junipero Serra and his successors. The "Mission Trail" stretches about 520 miles from San Diego to Solano. Our historic 1870 Carpenter Gothic church building once stood as the replacement for Mission San Jose in Fremont.

Why is the Feast of Christ the King a big deal? Pope Pius XI instituted the Feast of Christ the King in 1925. He wrote he hoped the feast would inspire Christians everywhere "to give Jesus Christ lordship over every aspect of their lives." He wrote that he hoped "the Faithful would gain strength and courage from the celebration of the feast, as we are reminded that Christ must reign in our hearts, minds, wills, and bodies."

Wouldn't that make this a feast peculiar to the Roman Catholic Church? It's not in the Prayer Book. It is an optional feast observed on the last Sunday in October. Many Anglican parishes observe the feast. If we think about it every Sunday is a celebration of Christ the King...Christ our King...having a Sunday set aside to make this acclamation makes perfect sense.

About 1100 years before the birth of Christ God's people already had a King...God! But they wanted a human king like everyone else. So they came to Samuel and asked him to give them a king. Samuel told God's people what they could expect from their human king:

- *Your sons will be drafted and sent off to war where they will be killed; he will also make your sons work in the fields*
- *Your daughters will have to clean the king's house and make it smell nice for him*
- *He will take your land, your servants, your best crops; he will even make you his slaves*
- *He will tax you unfairly and when you complain about how badly he treats you he won't listen to you*

God told Samuel to give the people what they wanted...a human king. He said to Samuel, "They aren't rejecting you; they are rejecting me."

Pope Pius XI lived during a time filled with political and religious turmoil much like what we are experiencing today. King Jesus tells us not to give up hope no matter how bad things look. He said, "The world will make you suffer. But be brave! I have defeated the world."

We call Jesus our Lord and King. He is fully God and fully man, but he is not like any human king. King Jesus always does what is best for us. That has not always been the case with human monarchs...some have done a better job than others.

Today we celebrate Jesus our Lord and King. He is *THE LORD* who always shows love and compassion for us. He is *THE KING* who came to us first as the little baby in the manger, and then spent his entire life on Earth serving others.

Jesus is God's Son who sets us free from sin and death by his own death and gives us true and everlasting peace the world can never give us...and the promise we will share in his kingdom in heaven.

God has given us a King and his Name is Jesus!

