

In the Old Testament reading for this Sunday we learn about the beginning of the Davidic line with the coronation of David as the King of Israel. In the Gospel we see the end of the Davidic line, Jesus, on his throne, the Cross where he sacrificed his life for us.

What a dichotomy of images. David in the sacred space, a location steeped in prayer and the history of Israel. Jesus on a hill next to the town dump. David surrounded by the leadership of Israel, all of them supporting his kingship. Jesus surrounded by the leadership of Israel, while they mock him in his agony. David resplendent in the robes of his office, Jesus, naked and bleeding on the cross.

In a side wing of Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome is the Vatican Treasures Museum. One of the exhibits is a cross, about 2 feet high made from the wood of the Cross on which our Savior died. A small piece of the Throne of God. The blood of Our Lord has permeated and colored that wood like a piece of pine dipped into colored stain. Contrast that image to the comfortable throne that David used during his reign. Eventually the reign of David as king came to an end, but the reign of Jesus as King will never end.

Jesus Christ has a threefold office as Priest, Prophet and King. As the Priest, the one and only Priest, he brings people closer to God through sacrifice. On the Cross Jesus, the perfect sacrifice, offers himself to the Father for the forgiveness of our sins. His last act in his crucifixion is to call out: "...Father, into your hands I commend my spirit". (*Luke 23:46*) He willingly gives up his life, trusting in his Father, making him a willing sacrifice, vice a victim of circumstance. He continues to this day and for all eternity to offer the same sacrifice in heaven and here on earth in the sacrifice of the Mass.

From the Cross, his eternal Throne, Jesus continues his Prophetic office. He continues to teach us how to live and come closer to him. "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." (*Luke 23:34*) Our Lord teaches us that there isn't any sin that cannot be forgiven, even his own torture and death. And that we are to forgive those who sin against us in the same manner.

"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (*Mat 27:46*) The beginning of the 22nd Psalm which starts as a lament but ends in triumph;

“The generation to come will be told of the Lord, that they may proclaim to a people yet unborn the deliverance you have brought.” He teaches us the importance of faith in God, even to, and particularly at the hour of our death.

The most apparent office exercised by Our Lord on the Cross is that of King. Not as we see kings in a secular sense, rulers who live a life of wealth and privilege, but as the Servant King, the one who gives all he has and all he is to the people he rules.

The inscription over his head on the Cross, “The King of the Jews”, intended to mock, but correct in fact for he is not only King of the Jews, he is King of all that ever was and all that ever will be. ...“Woman, behold, your son.” ... “Behold, your mother.” (*Jn 19:25-26*) A command, a most generous gift making his Mother the Mother of us all.

...“Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” ...“Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.” (*Lk 23:42-43*) The site of the Crucifixion becomes a confessional. In that act of faith, coming before Jesus the sacrifice for sin, the open admission of guilt, the request for forgiveness and the gates of paradise open for the thief at the King’s command, just as they open for us in the reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

In Baptism we are brought into and share in the threefold office of Christ as Priest, Prophet and King. The quest becomes, how do we live our threefold office? In preparing this homily I was skimming a book and came across an interesting concept for spiritual direction that I want to share with you.

How would you live if you knew you were going to die in the next 30 days? That is it; no longer invincible, no longer have all the time in the world, just 30 days. How would you live?

What relationships would you mend? How would it impact your prayer life? Would you make more of an effort to receive the Sacraments and attend Mass? How would you express your love for your spouse, your family, and your friends? What wisdom would you pass to your children? What is really important?

Think it over. This is how we should live everyday, all the time. This is how we should live our threefold office in Christ as priest, prophet and king.