



**SAINT THOMAS CHURCH FIFTH AVENUE**  
**in the City of New York**  
*The Reverend Canon Carl F. Turner, Rector*  
**www.SaintThomasChurch.org**

**Sunday, November 24, 2019**  
*The Feast of Christ the King*

*Festal Evensong*  
*at 4:00 p.m.*

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A Sermon by  
Sister Marie Promise Atelon SSM, *Wisdom Year Seminarian*  
*on*  
Zechariah 9:9-16 and Luke 19:11-27  
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### **Sermon on the Feast of Christ the King**

A few years ago, I was traveling in Africa. While our group was there, we met a king. A living, modern King. The King we are celebrating today, however, does not have many characteristics in common with the King we met.

We met with him in his court for about two hours. He did not speak; only his officers spoke, on his behalf. After a while I was getting frustrated. I thought, we came all the way here to visit him and we would not even hear the sound of his voice.

Perhaps the king does not talk in public with his guess, I am not sure. Jesus, on the other hand, spoke in public all the time. Jesus knows the disciples were looking forward to having him as King to restore order in Jerusalem. Jesus as a smart teacher always told a parable.

The disciples did not get the message Jesus was trying to convey through the many parables he told. They did not understand the type of King he was. So, Jesus told the parable of the ten pounds to establish the difference between his kingship and the kingship of the world.

At this point in Luke's gospel, Jesus is poised to enter Jerusalem as a king. Jesus does not need to go to Rome or to Jerusalem to become King, as was the custom of the time. He was already King. If we remember Jesus' answer to Pilate in John 18:36-37, "My Kingdom is not from this world. If my Kingdom were from this world, my servants would fight to prevent me being handed over to the authorities. But now my kingdom is not from here."

God's reign does not mirror the way worldly kingdoms operate. Worldly kingdoms depend on political posturing, military power, and the annihilation of enemies. The rulers of this world have a desire to act against those who resist their will to power. They go to war, they desire more status, power and land. However, their powers are limited. The real power belongs to Jesus the King, who brings peace, who brings justice and who shows compassion and mercy.

Jesus' kingdom is in the world and over the world but does not derive from the world's possibilities. Instead, his kingship is built on the sovereignty of Truth and love. His destiny is to give his life for others rather than to annihilate them.

Jesus' strategy is found in direct connection with God the Father. Jesus' kingdom has no geographical borders, no capital city, no parliament building. Jesus desires is to reign within our hearts to inspiring us to do the work that Jesus calls us to do. Is to liberate us and bring us closer to him in his most gracious kingdom.

The fulfilment of his reign is what we pray every day, "your Kingdom come." We are praying and asking Jesus' kingdom to come on earth as it is in heaven (David E. Garland 761). That kingdom will come when our hearts is transformed and when we engage in doing our part into the building of that kingdom.

So, the King we are celebrating today is one who does not need any confirmation from humans because he knows who he is. The one we are celebrating today is the King of Love, as Henry William Baker's words express in the Hymn 645: "The King of Love whom his goodness never faileth."

This king offers peace and forgiveness and governs only by the law of love. Jesus as King comes to us with great humility; no palace, no security, no attendants, no judgment -- just walking among the people whether they understood him or not. Instead of waiting to be served, he reached out in service, he heals, he feed and bring in the one who was excluded within the community.

This is in contrast with the king in the parable who punishes the careless servant who wraps the pound in a piece of cloth and passes hard judgement on him and as a result the king harshly punish the servant. The servant was operated by fear.

Sometimes I think we create our own punishment by hiding ourselves behind the walls of difference, perception, pride, and superiority and judgement. We find ourselves wrapping our pound into a piece of cloth and hiding it out of fear. We hold onto it in fear instead of putting it into God's service. The more we hold onto it, the more afraid we are and the more miserable we are and make those around us unhappy.

Let us pay attention to the pounds we have hidden out of fear into our life during the week. Jesus the King give it to us to put into service to build his Kingdom over all the face of the earth.

The African king I mentioned above finally, spoke with us after lunch. So, I had an opportunity to hear his voice after all. But Jesus, the King we celebrate today is talking to us all the time and everywhere. It is up to us to find time and to open our hearts to listen to him, so that he can guide us in the proper use of the gifts he has given us. Amen.