

Thirty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

A Message from Fr. Mark

“He has made us into a kingdom...”

Today is the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe. The readings today emphasize his greatness, but the second reading it says that Jesus also wants us to be great. He wants us to share in his power. It says that he has “made us into a kingdom, priests for his God and Father...” (Rev. 1:5-8) By baptism, we are given a share in his power to be priest, prophet, and king. All Catholics are supposed to help Jesus to rule, guide and pray for the world. We know that the saints became stronger and healthier and wiser and more fully alive. The saints developed their natural abilities to the utmost with the help of God. St. Irenaeus wrote, “The Glory of God is man, fully alive.”

We can be proud of the fact that many Catholics have become great and have had a positive influence on the world. Many of the greatest artists and writers and musicians of the world were Catholic, including J.R. Tolkien, William Shakespeare, and Flannery O’Connor.

Many great athletes have been outspoken about their Catholic faith helped them through difficult times, including Vince Lombardi, Babe Ruth, Joe DiMaggio, Tommy Lasorda, Brett Favre, Don Shula, and Phillip Rivers.

It is important for us to remember that many of the greatest scientists were priests or devout Catholics, including Roger Bacon (Franciscan who invented the scientific method), Blaise Pascal (mathematician and physicist), Louis Pasteur (chemist who invented “pasteurization”), Gregor Mendel (who founded the science of Genetics), Eugenio Barsanti (priest who invented the internal combustion engine), Ramon Llull (invented the first computer), Theodoric Freiberg (priest who gave the first correct explanation of rainbows), Georges Lemaitre (priest physicist who first proposed the theory of the Big Bang). (There are more examples at www.thomism.org/history/catholic_scientists).

We rejoice today that Jesus is the King, and we also thank him because he has “called us to the glory that made us a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people set apart” (Sunday Preface 1).

Tomorrow evening from 6:00-7:30 PM will be the first of our four Bible Study classes taught by myself and Fr. Joe and Fr. Matthew. By studying the first three chapters of the Gospel of Matthew, we will prepare ourselves to enter fully into the Advent and Christmas season. We will learn how our heavenly King was born for us so that we could be reborn through baptism and share in his royal mission!