

I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink,
a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me,
ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.

MATTHEW 25:35-36



OUR LORD
JESUS
CHRIST
KING
OF THE UNIVERSE

NOVEMBER 22, 2020

Blessed Miguel Agustín Pro (1891-1927)

November 23

Graham Greene's classic *The Power and the Glory* immortalized Mexico's persecuted Church of the 1920s. But photographs of Father Pro—arms outstretched to image Christ Crucified, kneeling in prayer before the firing squad, crumpled dead on the ground—vividly, visually remind us that not long ago, not far away, the faith we take for granted cost everything! Born to a mining family, Miguel became a Jesuit and was sent to study Catholic labor movements in Belgium in preparation for evangelizing Mexico's workers. But he returned to find a Mexico determined to annihilate Catholicism, and, like priests before him during Roman persecutions, England's Reformation, and in China today, ministered secretly to an "underground Church" until apprehended and sentenced to the firing squad. In his final moments, Father Pro blessed his executioners, forgave his enemies, and shouted: "Viva el Cristo Rey!—Long Live Christ the King!"—his defiant, dying proclamation of ultimate, transcendent loyalty. Father Pro's martyrdom reinvigorated that beleaguered Church, whose countless faithful, never again afraid, would throng John Paul II when he visited Pro's beloved Mexico fifty-two years later.

—Peter Scagnelli, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

Readings for the Week

Monday: Rv 14:1-3, 4b-5; Ps 24:1bc-4ab, 5-6; Lk 21:1-4
Tuesday: Rv 14:14-19; Ps 96:10-13; Lk 21:5-11
Wednesday: Rv 15:1-4; Ps 98:1-3ab, 7-9; Lk 21:12-19
Thursday: Rv 18:1-2, 21-23; 19:1-3, 9a; Ps 100:1b-5; Lk 21:20-28
Thanksgiving Day (suggested): Sir 50:22-24; Ps 145:2-11; 1 Cor 1:3-9; Lk 17:11-19
Friday: Rv 20:1-4, 11 — 21:2; Ps 84:3-6a, 8a; Lk 21:29-33
Saturday: Rv 22:1-7; Ps 95:1-7ab; Lk 21:34-36
Sunday: Is 63:16b-17, 19b; 64:2-7; Ps 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19; 1 Cor 1:3-9; Mk 13:33-37



Saints and Special Observances

Sunday: Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe
Monday: Thirty-fourth or Last Week in Ordinary Time; St. Clement I; St. Columban; Bl. Miguel Agustín Pro
Tuesday: St. Andrew Dũng-Lạc and Companions
Wednesday: St. Catherine of Alexandria
Thursday: Thanksgiving Day
Saturday: Blessed Virgin Mary



The Shepherd King


The job of shepherd and the job of king couldn't be more different from each other. Shepherds are on the lowest rung of society, kings are at the top. But God says, through the prophet Ezekiel, that the Messiah will lead in a way very different from earthly authorities who lord it over their people and cause harm with their poor leadership. Our King takes on the job himself. Christ, like a shepherd, will give rest, seek out the lost, bring back the strayed and scattered ones. He will heal the wounded and bind up the injured. He does not delegate, but will "shepherd them rightly." We have a king who cares for us and who is not afraid to "judge between one sheep and another" (Ezekiel 34:17).

Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

November 24

Except from the NAS © 2010, 1991, 1970, CCD

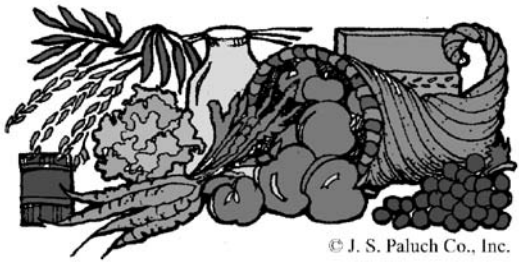
saint snippets



"Whoever loses his life for my sake will find it."
—Matthew 16:25

St. Andrew Dũng-Lạc
19th-century Catholic convert, priest, and one of 117 martyrs in Vietnam between 1820 and 1862

Copyright © 2018, Michael Thimons



Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe November 22, 2020

*“I was hungry and you gave me food,
I was thirsty and you gave me drink.”*

— **Matthew 25:35**

Treasures from Our Tradition

Although our Puritan forebears at Plymouth Rock were almost a hundred years removed from their Catholic roots, the old liturgical calendar still had an unconscious claim on their hearts. We’ve already seen how on Saint Martin’s Day, November 11, medieval continental Europe observed a great harvest day of Thanksgiving, with games, dances, parades, and a festive dinner of roast goose. With the goose went ample draughts of “Saint Martin’s Wine,” the first wine of the new harvest. Martinmas celebrated full barns and larders stocked for the winter. Even after the Reformation, the tradition of eating goose on Saint Martin’s Day was retained in Holland, and it was there that our Pilgrims encountered this tradition. When Governor Bradford sent four hunters out into the Massachusetts wilderness in the autumn of 1621, they did indeed find some geese and ducks, and were persuaded by the indigenous people to try turkey, too. Just as the liturgical calendar has been tweaked over the years, President Roosevelt moved Thanksgiving to the third Thursday in November in 1939, probably to extend the Christmas shopping season. The protest was so great that in 1941 the day established by President Lincoln, the last Thursday in November, was restored. If the Pilgrims had known of the Martinmas connection, they might never have celebrated at all!

—Rev. James Field, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

As we celebrate the solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, many of the traditional hymns and images for the day are joyful and triumphal. For some, these connotations may be perceived as negative. In these days when there are strong divisions within the Church, and when some government leaders are so far away from the people, we need to hear all of today’s scriptures, and draw a bigger, fuller picture of Christ as servant king. In Ezekiel, we see God as both the tender, loving shepherd and the one who will judge at the Second Coming. This ties in with Matthew’s Gospel and separation of sheep and goats and “whatsoever you do.” We pray Psalm 23 with great familiarity and hope. First Corinthians carefully explains to us the order in which all will happen. This is not an evil dictatorship, or a power-hungry leader, but the culmination of a plan that was carefully laid out in love.

OLD IDEA, RECENT ADDITION

Perhaps it is important to remember that while the image of Christ as King has been known throughout Christianity, this feast was founded in 1925 as a reaction and a response to growing secularism, communism, and atheism that were becoming prevalent after World War I. If we pull back the lens even further, we will remember that throughout history there has seldom been a peaceful time in the Christian world. The Holy Land itself has frequently been a battle ground. There have been schisms and divisions in the history of the church itself, and every church council was convened to try to correct some mistak-

en notion, world event, or church heresy. Nor has church leadership always had clean hands, and there have been wars, genocides, and insurrections “in the name of Christ.” Today, when more and more people are leaving organized religion altogether, and people identify themselves as “spiritual but not religious” or “nones,” the need for Christ as leader and ruler and guide is more pressing than ever.

INHERIT THE KINGDOM

The world in which we live is complex. We are a diverse, global society and there are many issues and opinions ranging from climate change to politics to creed. Sometimes we try and sort it all out, and it is hard to know who and what to believe. One can find multiple takes on the same news story, and social media can easily sway us. Yet when we focus on the Gospel story, it seems very simple indeed. We do not have to know it all or figure it all out. We are not the one on the throne during the Last Judgment. When God starts separating the sheep from the goats, the formula is a simple rule of thumb. “When did you see Christ in others? When did you respond accordingly?” It does not ask if you are Catholic or even Christian; whether you had a police record or an incurable disease; whether you had a PhD or a fifth-grade education, or what languages you spoke. The call is to remember that “Whatsoever you did to the least you did for me.” And then there will be the invitation, “Come you who are blessed. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”

