

Homily

CLOSING OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE DAUGHTERS OF CHARITY



SOLEMNITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, KING OF THE UNIVERSE
Paris, Sunday, 21 November 2021

Readings: Daniel 7:13-14; Psalm 93; Revelation 1:5-8; John 18:33b-37

I do not know, when the present dates were chosen for your Assembly, if it was so that it would close on the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe. Nevertheless, you probably could not have selected a more appropriate day than this glorious feast.

Today, all the readings speak of the kingship of Jesus Christ. Many of our countries no longer have members of the royalty as their heads. For the most part, our leaders are elected officials, not hereditary ones. So, the idea of kingship is somewhat foreign to us. Nonetheless, Jesus clearly proclaims, in affirming Pilate's words, that he is a king. However, he also clarifies that his kingdom is not of this world. For this reason, Christians of every country proclaim Jesus Christ as their King, King of the Universe.

What does it mean to us that we take Jesus as our King? We can find the answer to that question in the readings. The Book of Daniel tells us that "all peoples, nations, and languages serve him" and that "his dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not be taken away, his kingship shall not be destroyed." In other words, we are to serve him and he always will be our King. The psalm explains that "he has made the world firm, not to be moved" and that "his decrees are worthy of

trust ... holiness befits [his] house ... for length of days.” Again, his kingship is eternal and we can be confident in his commandments. The Book of Revelation proclaims that “Jesus Christ is the faithful witness ..., who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, who has made us into a kingdom, priests for his God and Father.” He is also “the one who is and who was and who is to come, the almighty.” Here we come to the heart of our faith, recognizing Jesus as the one who loves us and has saved us from our sins through the shedding of his blood. He is not only our King, he is also our Savior and Redeemer, thereby bringing us into his Kingdom and making us, as he is, priests for his God and Father.

You have come to the end of your more than month-long stay in the City of Lights and at the heart of the Little Company. As you return to your provinces, you take with you not only the knowledge gained through the presentations made, but also additional inspirations from the discussions you had, as well as new friendships with Sisters from other parts of the world. It will be difficult to share all you experienced with the Sisters in your provinces, but I urge you to try.

The theme of your Assembly, “Ephata—be opened,” does not close with the Assembly today. You must further develop it through the Inter-Assemblies Document you will receive and make it part of your Provincial and Local Plans over the next six years. It must be part of your life even as you begin working on a new theme, four years from now, leading up to the next General Assembly, God willing, in 2027. Until then, you must put into practice all you gleaned from the past two years and, especially, from the past several weeks, so that you will continue to “Break through the gate... Go towards... Encounter” the persons who are poor whom you strive to serve with such devotion.

In particular, I ask that you endeavor to share with the Sisters of your province the enthusiasm and the spirit that has filled these moments. It will not be easy, but everything that was captured on the website has

helped to make each Sister more a part of the work here. Perhaps, in returning to it occasionally, you can recapture the fervor contained in this experience. Do not let the many day-to-day concerns and activities that await your return stop you from keeping alive the flame of humility, simplicity, and charity that has burned here.

If you do become discouraged, I ask you to remember that our King reigns from a cross. He told us that, if we wish to follow him, we too must take up our cross (cf. Matthew 16:24). Let us do so joyfully and sing out, in the words of the 19th-century English hymn:

**“Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim
'til all the world adore his sacred name.”**

Tomaž Mavrič, CM
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