

CHRIST THE KING

22nd November 2026

Homeless Jesus – Timothy Schmalz

In the name of the + Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Prayer of Preparation

We come in the name of Christ
to offer our praise and thanksgiving,
to hear and receive God's holy word,
to pray for the needs of the world,
and to seek the forgiveness of our sins,
that by the power of the Holy Spirit
we may give ourselves to the service of God.

HYMN

1 Christ is made the sure foundation,
And the precious corner-stone,
Who, the two walls underlying
bound in each, binds both in one.
Holy Sion's help for ever,
and her confidence alone.

2 All that dedicated city,
dearly loved of God on high,
in exultant jubilation
pours perpetual melody;
God the One in Three adoring
Singing everlastingly

3 To this temple, where we call thee,
come, O Lord of Hosts, today;
with thy wonted lovingkindness
hear thy servants as they pray,
and thy fullest benediction
shed within its walls for ay.

4 Here vouchsafe to all thy servants
gifts of grace by prayer to gain;
Here to have and hold forever
those good things their prayers obtain.
and hereafter in thy glory
with thy blessed ones to reign.

Laud and honour to the Father
Laud and honour to the Son,
Laud and honour to the Spirit,
Ever Three and ever One,
One in love, and One in splendour,
While unending ages run. Amen

Invitation to Confession

Jesus says, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand.' So let us turn away from sin and turn to Christ, confessing our sins in penitence and faith. *cf Matthew 4.17*

The kingdom is yours,
but we turn away from your just rule:
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

The power is yours,
but we trust in our own power and strength:
Christ, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.

The glory is yours,
but we fall short of the glory of God:
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

Absolution

May the Father of all mercies
Cleanse us from our sins, +
and restore us in his image
to the praise and glory of his name,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

The Collect for the Christ the King

Eternal Father,
whose Son Jesus Christ ascended to the throne of heaven
that he might rule over all things as Lord and King:
keep the Church in the unity of the Spirit and in the bond of peace,
and bring the whole created order to worship at his feet;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

The first reading from scripture
Ezekiel 34. 11,16, 20-24

11 “‘For this is what the Sovereign Lord says: I myself will search for my sheep and look after
them. 12 As a shepherd looks after his scattered flock when he is with them, so will I look after my
sheep. I will rescue them from all the places where they were scattered on a day of clouds and
darkness. 13 I will bring them out from the nations and gather them from the countries, and I will bring
them into their own land. I will pasture them on the mountains of Israel, in the ravines and in all the
settlements in the land. 14 I will tend them in a good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel will be
their grazing land. There they will lie down in good grazing land, and there they will feed in a rich
pasture on the mountains of Israel. 15 I myself will tend my sheep and have them lie down, declares the
Sovereign Lord. 16 I will search for the lost and bring back the strays. I will bind up the injured and
strengthen the weak, but the sleek and the strong I will destroy. I will shepherd the flock with justice.

20 “‘Therefore this is what the Sovereign Lord says to them: See, I myself will judge between the fat
sheep and the lean sheep. 21 Because you shove with flank and shoulder, butting all the weak sheep
with your horns until you have driven them away, 22 I will save my flock, and they will no longer be
plundered. I will judge between one sheep and another. 23 I will place over them one shepherd, my
servant David, and he will tend them; he will tend them and be their shepherd. 24 I the Lord will be their
God, and my servant David will be prince among them. I the Lord have spoken.

This is the word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

Psalm 95

1 Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord;
let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.
2 Let us come before him with thanksgiving
and extol him with music and song.

3 For the Lord is the great God,
the great King above all gods.
4 In his hand are the depths of the earth,
and the mountain peaks belong to him.
5 The sea is his, for he made it,
and his hands formed the dry land.

6 Come, let us bow down in worship,
let us kneel before the Lord our Maker;
7 for he is our God
and we are the people of his pasture,
the flock under his care.

The second reading from scripture
Ephesians 1. 15-end

15 For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, 16 I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. 17 I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. 18 I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, 19 and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength 20 he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, 21 far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. 22 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

This is the word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

HYMN

1 Hail to the Lord's anointed
Great David's greater Son.
Hail in the time appointed
His reign on earth begun
He comes to break oppression,
To set the captive free,
To take away transgression
And rule in equity.

2 He comes with succour speedy
To those who suffer wrong,
To help the poor and needy
and bid the weak be strong.
To give them songs for sighing
Their darkness turn to light
Whose souls, condemned and dying
Were precious in his sight.

3 O'er every foe victorious
He on his throne shall rest;
From age to age more glorious
All blessing and all-blessed.
The tide of time shall never
His covenant remove.
His Name shall stand forever
That Name to us is Love.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia.
You, Christ, are the king of glory,
The eternal Son of the Father.
Alleluia.

The Gospel

The Holy Gospel is written in the 25th chapter of the gospel of Matthew beginning at the 31st verse

Glory be to thee, O Lord
The Sheep and the Goats

31 “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious
throne. 32 All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from
another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. 33 He will put the sheep on his right and the
goats on his left.

34 “Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your
inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. 35 For I was hungry and you
gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you
invited me in, 36 I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in
prison and you came to visit me.’

37 “Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and
give you something to drink? 38 When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes
and clothe you? 39 When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’

40 “The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and
sisters of mine, you did for me.’

41 “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal
fire prepared for the devil and his angels. 42 For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was
thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, 43 I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed
clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.’

44 “They also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes
or sick or in prison, and did not help you?’

45 “He will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do
for me.’

46 “Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord
Praise be to thee, O Christ

Reflection

In 2013 the Canadian sculptor Timothy Schmalz produced “Homeless Jesus,” a bronze sculpture which shows Jesus, homeless, sleeping on a park bench. Schmalz, a devout Catholic, describes the sculpture as a “visual translation” of the Gospel. The only sign that this is Jesus are the wounds which are visible on his feet.

This challenges us when this week we celebrate the Feast of Christ the King – what sort of king is this? How can we bring these two images together Christ the King and Homeless Jesus?

When Jesus was brought before Pilate by the Jewish authorities, Pilate asked him directly “Are you the King of the Jews?” This interview is not normal, why would Pilate be so interested in the identity of a man accused by leaders of a religion in an occupied country. His question goes beyond the routine

identification of a defendant. “Are you the King of the Jews?” or even and ironic “So you are the King of the Jews?”, which assumes either a false and dangerous claim or a case of delusion.

Jesus’ reply is enigmatic, mysterious.

> “Yes, but not as you think, My Kingdom is not of this world nor does it have its origin in this world. If My Kingdom were of this world, my servants would be fighting hard to keep me from being handed over to the Jews; but as it is, my Kingdom is not of this world.”

So Pilate said to Him, “Then You are a King?” Jesus answered,

> “You say correctly that I am a King. This is why I was born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth who is a friend of the truth and belongs to the truth hears and listens carefully to my voice.” John 18 36-38

Pilate said to him, “What is truth?” but never waited for an answer.

In fact Pilate was staring truth in the face, for Jesus had earlier said to his disciple Thomas, "I am the way and the truth and the life" John 14:6.

The Kingdom of God came in the person of Jesus in the sense that he is the only person ever to live who completely fulfilled the will of God. The Kingdom is within him and expressed through him in what he said and did. John calls the miracles of Jesus ‘signs’ and that is helpful; they were signs of what this Kingdom of God is like. Jesus Christ healed sickness, raised the dead, restored people. “This is the Kingdom of God” he said.

When God raised Jesus from death, God confirmed his message; death is overcome in this Kingdom. Read the end of the Bible and it describes this Kingdom;

> ‘And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. Revelation 21.4

What is this Kingdom of God? And how is Christ the King? We struggle to comprehend what this means or would be like because we do not see it and have never experienced it. Indeed, in the whole of human history, such a Kingdom has never been on this earth. So, what can it mean to speak of Jesus as King of what appears to be an invisible Kingdom? Jesus taught us to pray to the Father, ‘Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done.’ What do we think we mean when we say those words?

We pray ‘Thy Kingdom come’ and perhaps leave that thought in our heads as something that God is to do, nothing to do with us. But we are caught up in that petition. This has profound and permanent implications for those who are disciples of Jesus. We have chosen to follow Jesus – not just as an example – but something much more profound. We acknowledge him as our King and thereby we give our allegiance. ‘Do you submit to Christ as Lord?’, is asked of each baptism candidate. This is more than just following an example.

Jesus is a King whose very being is self-sacrifice and those who acknowledge his Kingship are to live by the principles of the Kingdom. How we live, how we spend our money, our time, our career choices, our voluntary work, the way we relate to people and the way we worship. We are to bring the Kingdom – just as Jesus did – into every aspect of our lives We are part of the answer to that prayer. Are you and I bringing in the Kingdom? It was said of Margaret, Queen of Scotland whose day we remembered on recently, ‘She was a woman of prayer as well as good works who seemed to influence for good all with whom she came into contact.’ Could that be said of us?

Whenever people stand in defiance of despair, and act for what is right and good – that is a visible expression of the Kingdom of God in our lives. This Kingdom is not invisible.

At the crucifixion Jesus is cruelly nailed to a cross between two thieves. He is among the dregs of humanity; now one of them himself. He is dying under successive volleys of abuse, jeered at by the Jewish authorities, mocked by the Governor's soldiers, taunted by one of the criminals.

And then quite unexpectedly, in the midst of all this, one of the criminals speaks and quite astonishingly, acknowledges the Kingship of Jesus: "Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom." And, more astonishingly still, Jesus replies, "Indeed, I promise you, today you will be with me in paradise." In some icons, in the bottom corner, you see the image of this man running into paradise. The first person into this Kingdom was a thief.

In these few words the reality of the Kingdom is whispered. This is a deeper reality shaped by a different Kingship. Jesus speaks with an authority different from, and greater than, the system that is implementing his death.

In these words, is caught and symbolized the whole meaning of what was really happening: the forgiving, acquitting, life-giving meaning of the death and resurrection of Christ, and its ability to take any of us, however down among the dregs we are, somewhere else, somewhere better, the Kingdom of God.

Christ the King and Homeless Jesus come together. The Christ beyond our comprehension yet as close to us as can be. Such an encounter with Jesus is a living present, movement - there is no mistaking it. Millions of people know this. This is not an invisible Kingdom.

Intercessions

Let us with confidence present our prayers and supplications to the throne of grace.

We pray for all those in positions of power,
that they may govern with wisdom and integrity,
serving the needs of their people.
May your reign come;
Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for the Church, the sign of your reign,
that it may extend your welcome to people of every
race and background.
May your kingdom come;
Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for Christians of every denomination,
that together we may come to understand
the royal priesthood you bestowed on us in baptism.
May your dominion come;
Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for those whose commitment to truth
brings them into conflict with earthly powers,
that they may have the courage to endure.
May your rule come;
Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for our communities of faith,
that attentive to your word
we may always worship in spirit and in truth.
May your reign come;
Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for those who are in trouble and are burdened with worry.
In your mercy bring light into their darkness,
by your grace lift their despair and bring assurance of your care and love.
We pray for any in our thoughts today.
Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for those who have recently died.
In mercy, bring comfort and bring us into peace.
We remember in gratitude the lives of those we have loved.
Lord, hear our prayer.

Loving God,
you have taught us that the power of the heart
is greater than the power of wealth and might.
Hear us as we pray for the fulfilment of your reign.
We ask this through Jesus Christ our King;
to him be glory and power for ever. Amen

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray:

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours now and for ever.
Amen.

Stir up, O Lord,
the wills of your faithful people;
that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works,
may by you be plenteously rewarded;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

We pray for God's blessing

Christ our King make you faithful and strong to do his will,
that you may reign with him in glory;
and the blessing
of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.
Amen.

HYMN

1 Crown him with many crowns,
the Lamb upon his throne.
Hark! How the heavenly anthem drowns
all music but its own.
Awake, my soul, and sing
of him who died for thee,
and hail him as thy matchless King
through all eternity.

2 Crown him the Lord of life,
who triumphed over the grave,
and rose victorious in the strife
for those he came to save.
His glories now we sing,
who died, and rose on high,
who died eternal life to bring,
and lives that death may die.

3 Crown him the Lord of love,
behold his hands and side,
rich wounds, yet visible above,
in beauty glorified.
No angel in the sky
can fully bear that sight,
but downward bends his burning eye
at mysteries so bright.

4 Crown him the Lord of Heaven,
enthroned in worlds above,
crown him the King to whom is given
the wondrous name of Love.
Crown him with many crowns,
as thrones before him fall;
Crown him, ye kings, with many crowns,
for he is King of all.

5 Crown him the Lord of years,
the Potentate of time,
Creator of the rolling spheres,
ineffably sublime.
all hail, Redeemer, hail!
For thou hast died for me;
thy praise and glory shall not fail
throughout eternity.