CHAPTER 11 OF 11 · PREACHED NOVEMBER 22, 2026 · SOLEMNITY OF CHRIST THE KING

Christ the King

The King who came looking for us

Ezekiel 34:11-12, 15-17 · Psalm 23 · 1 Corinthians 15:20-26, 28 · Matthew 25:31-46 (Sheep and Goats)



I The Teaching

In the Readings: Naming the Whole Run

- The whole road we have walked: what sin is; anger, envy, pride, greed, gluttony, sloth and lust; the sins that cry to heaven; and the saints
- None of them, in the end, is what we're judged on

The Gospel: Sheep and Goats

> "*Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.*" (*Matthew* 25:40)

- The judgment scene doesn't ask which capital sin was mastered: it asks whether mercy was shown or withheld

Nature: What Kind of King

> "*A kingdom of truth and life, a kingdom of holiness and grace, a kingdom of justice, love and peace.*" (*Preface of Christ the King*)

- Pius XI instituted this feast (Quas Primas, 1925) against a world organizing itself as if God did not exist. He asked that Christ reign in our minds, wills, hearts, and bodies (Quas Primas 33). That is the same four-part ground the series has covered.
- His throne is a cross; His title is nailed above it. He came "not to be served but to serve and to give his life" (Mk 10:45). Every capital sin was a bid to reign on our own terms; His kingship reigns by self-gift.
- "Christ… fully reveals man to himself" (Gaudium et Spes 22, John Paul II's favorite text). The King also shows what we are for. Every capital sin was a lie about what would make us happy.

Kinds: The Six Works of Judgment

The six works in Matthew 25 are the Church's corporal works of mercy. A loose pairing lets the whole series come home:

- **Feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty:** gluttony turned outward.
- **Welcoming the stranger:** the undoing of envy and pride's closed circles, and of the sins that cry to heaven.
- **Clothing the naked:** avarice undone. St. Basil: the coat hanging unused in your closet belongs to the one who has none.

- **Caring for the sick:** sloth's cure: showing up.
- **Visiting the imprisoned:** anger's cure: mercy toward the guilty, forgiving seventy-seven times.

Effects: "That God May Be All in All"

- "The last enemy to be destroyed is death… so that God may be all in all" (1 Cor 15:26, 28). The end of the story is not only that sin is defeated, but that God fills everything.
- Aquinas: final happiness is the vision of God (Summa I-II, Q. 3, a. 8). It is the only thing large enough for the desire every capital sin misdirected.

Remedies: The Shepherd Who Heals

> *"The lost I will seek out, the strayed I will bring back, the injured I will bind up, the sick I will heal." (Ezekiel 34:16)*

- Before the King judges, He shepherds. Ezekiel's verbs are the whole series' remedies in one line: seeking, bringing back, binding up, healing.
- This is healing of the whole person, spirit, soul, and body, at the center of Christ's ministry. Psalm 23 says the same: "he restores my soul."
- St. Josemaría's homily on this feast: Christ reigns first in each heart, through freedom and love (Christ is Passing By 179-187).

Living It Out in Ordinary Life

- "In all your deeds remember your last end, and you will never sin" (Sirach 7:36; 7:40 in the Vulgate); the recollection material's key text on the Last Things, and a fitting last line for the whole series.
- Love, not fear, should lead us to consider the last things. Each of us will render an account of the talents received (Furrow 895); the parable of the talents (see the chapter on lust) and this judgment scene belong together.
- A corrective to end on: the quest for holiness cannot be reduced to fighting against sin; our heart plays an important part, and the struggle is centered on the person of Christ (The Way 584). The King, not the checklist.
- Jesus came to save, not to condemn: confidence in Him as our most understanding friend (The Way 730-732).
- Placing Christ at the summit of all human activities (Gaudium et Spes 75; Furrow 608); the kingship we're celebrating, lived in ordinary life.

Taking It Home

- Tanquerey's own conclusion to this whole struggle: some trace of these tendencies will always remain to try our patience, but "aided by God's grace, we shall overcome them more easily"
- Every sin named this fall was, underneath, a failure to see and serve the person in front of us, and every remedy pointed the same direction: outward, toward mercy

II Examination of Conscience

Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created, and you shall renew the face of the earth. Lord, by the light of the Holy Spirit, help me to see my sins clearly, to be truly sorry for them, and to trust in your mercy. Amen.

How to read the ◆ GRAVE MATTER tag

A question with this tag concerns a serious matter. A sin is mortal only when grave matter is chosen with full knowledge and deliberate consent (Catechism 1857), and fear, habit or other factors can lessen responsibility. If you are unsure about anything, bring it to Confession and ask the priest.

This final examination asks the King's one question: did I see Him in the least of His brothers and sisters? It follows the works of mercy, and then Pius XI's four places where Christ must reign.

The corporal works of mercy

- ☐ Have I fed the hungry and given drink to the thirsty, or looked away?
- ☐ Have I welcomed the stranger: the newcomer, the immigrant, the one who feels out of place?
- ☐ Have I clothed the naked, giving away what I don't use?
- ☐ Have I visited or cared for the sick, the homebound or the elderly?
- ☐ Have I remembered those in prison, and the families of prisoners?
- ☐ Have I prayed for and honored the dead, and comforted those who grieve?
- ☐ ◆ GRAVE MATTER Have I refused to help someone in serious need when I could have? (CCC 1033, 2447)

The spiritual works of mercy

- ☐ Have I counseled the doubtful, or helped someone who is confused about the faith?
- ☐ Have I taught the faith, especially to my children or those in my care?
- ☐ Have I lovingly corrected someone who was doing wrong, when it was my place?
- ☐ Have I comforted the sorrowful?
- ☐ Have I forgiven injuries?
- ☐ Have I borne wrongs patiently?
- ☐ Have I prayed for the living and the dead?

Christ reigning in my mind

- ☐ Do I accept the truths of the faith, or pick and choose?
- ☐ Do I take time to learn my faith: Scripture, the Catechism, good reading?

Christ reigning in my will

- ☐ Do I obey God's commandments when they cost me something?

- [ ] Is there an area of my life I have kept off-limits to Him?

Christ reigning in my heart

- [ ] Do I love God above all things, or has a false king taken His place?
- [ ] Which of the capital sins still reigns most in me?

Christ reigning in my body

- [ ] Do I treat my body as a temple of the Holy Spirit, in chastity and temperance?
- [ ] Do I care for my health as a gift?

The last things

- [ ] Do I think about my death and judgment with trust, or avoid the thought?
- [ ] Am I ready to meet the King today?
- [ ] Do I live for heaven, or only for this life?

For particular states of life

Married

- [ ] Do my spouse and I serve Christ together in others?

Parents

- [ ] Are my children learning from me to see Christ in the poor?

Single adults

- [ ] Do I offer my time to serve those who have no one?

Young people

- [ ] Have I been kind to the classmate nobody notices?

At work

- [ ] Do I see Christ in coworkers, customers and those who serve me?

Beneath the surface

These are not accusations but invitations to let Christ heal what lies underneath.

- [ ] Which of Ezekiel's four is me: lost, strayed, injured, or sick (Ezekiel 34:16)?
- [ ] Have I tried to heal myself by willpower alone, instead of letting the Shepherd do it?
- [ ] Where have I stopped seeing Christ in others because I am tired or hurt?
- [ ] Can I trust that He is the King who came looking for me first?

Act of Contrition

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, and I detest all my sins because of Thy just punishments, but most of all because they offend Thee, my God, who art all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Thy grace, to sin no more and to avoid the near occasion of sin. Amen.

III Meditation: When Did We See You?

With the Gospel of the day, Matthew 25:31-46

Take a quiet moment. Maybe it's the Sunday before Thanksgiving, the house full of plans. Take a slow breath.

The King is here with you, not far off on a distant throne, but close, the way a shepherd stays close to his sheep.

When you are ready, picture the scene Jesus describes: the Son of Man coming in glory, all the nations gathered before Him. He separates them as a shepherd separates sheep from goats. And both groups ask the same surprised question: "Lord, when did we see you hungry?"

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The sheep didn't know they had served Him. The goats didn't know they had walked past Him. Sit with that for a moment. The King doesn't ask which capital sin you mastered. He asks whether you saw Him.

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Walk back through your past week. The cashier at the store. The coworker who seemed down. The person in traffic who cut you off. The teenager across the dinner table. The elderly neighbor. Where did you see Him? Where did you miss Him? Don't hurry.

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Now hear Ezekiel, in this Sunday's first reading. Before the King judges, He shepherds: "The lost I will seek out, the strayed I will bring back, the injured I will bind up, the sick I will heal." Hear each promise slowly. Which one is for you? Lost: you don't know how you got here. Strayed: you knew the way and wandered. Injured: someone hurt you, and it's still open. Sick: a pattern has a hold on you.

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Let Him come to you in that one. You don't heal yourself by willpower. "I myself will look after and tend my sheep." Let the Shepherd do His work.

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Look back over this whole fall. Every capital sin we named was, underneath, a way of not seeing. Every healing is getting our sight back. Ask the King for new eyes.

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Thanksgiving is this Thursday. Think of someone who might eat alone. Could you set a place for them? Ask Him.

Close by praying the Psalm one more time: “The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.” Our hearts are restless until they rest in Him, and He is the King who came looking for us first.

How to Use This Guide

The Teaching

Each chapter begins with the outline of that Sunday's homily: the readings, what the sin is, the sins it gives rise to (its "daughters"), what it does to us, and its remedies. Read it slowly. Look up the references that catch your attention.

Examination of Conscience

Use it before Confession, or as a nightly examen. You don't have to answer every question at once; let the Holy Spirit show you what matters. Each examination ends with questions for particular states of life and a few questions about the wounds beneath our sins.

Meditation

A guided prayer with that Sunday's Gospel. Find a quiet place and read it slowly. Where you see a pause, stop and stay with the Lord for a while.

Questions tagged ◆ GRAVE MATTER concern serious matters. For a sin to be mortal, three conditions must all be present together: grave matter, full knowledge, and deliberate consent (Catechism 1857). Fear, habit, ignorance, immaturity and other factors can lessen responsibility (Catechism 1735, 2352). The tag does not mean you have committed a mortal sin. It means the question deserves special care.

Mortal sins should be confessed, in kind and number as best you can recall, before receiving Holy Communion (Catechism 1385, 1456-1457). If you are unsure about anything, bring it to Confession and ask the priest. That is why he is there.

Come to Confession

Saturday	7:30 AM and 3:30 PM
Sunday	7:30 AM, 10:00 AM, 1:00 PM (Spanish) and 5:00 PM
Monday–Friday	5:30 AM and 8:15 AM
Wednesday	also 5:00 PM

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