



# Encountering Christ

## The Wednesday Prayer Custom for Homes, Schools & Parishes

Prayerfully preparing for Sunday Mass with special prayers for our school families



Set aside 10-15 minutes and create a suitable environment by removing any distractions. Make sure that you are comfortable. Perhaps light a candle. Make the sign of the cross and remain still for a minute of settling silence.



Remember that through this scripture our Lord is truly present. Read the Gospel, aloud and slowly, and pay attention to any words that stand out. If any do, meditate on them for a few minutes and be invited into a dialogue with God.

# 1

## Read

### The Gospel for Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2024

#### JUDGEMENT BEFORE PILATE

“Are you the king of the Jews?” Pilate asked. Jesus replied, “Do you ask this of your own accord, or have others spoken to you about me?” Pilate answered, “Am I a Jew? It is your own people and the chief priests who have handed you over to me: what have you done?” Jesus replied, “Mine is not a kingdom of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, my men would have fought to prevent my being surrendered to the Jews. But my kingdom is not of this kind.” “So you are a king then?” said Pilate. “It is you who say it,” answered Jesus. “Yes, I am a king. I was born for this; I came into the world for this: to bear witness to the truth; and all who are on the side of truth listen to my voice.”

**Taken from John 18:33b-37 Christ the King, Year B**

# 3

## Respond & Request

Now slowly and prayerfully read the Gospel once again but this time in silence. Consider how this Gospel could apply to your life in general. Thank God for any insight you may have received.

Then ask God to bless you with a spiritual gift to help you act on any resolution you have made. Perhaps: love, hope, understanding, wisdom, faithfulness, peace, patience, humility, joy, forgiveness, self-control, courage, generosity, faith or something else.

# 2

## Reflect

After reading the Gospel, did any words stand out? If they did, ponder or discuss them before proceeding with the reflection.

In some ways this awe-inspiring scene is part of the climax of John’s Passion Narrative. Throughout the narrative John emphasises the ultimate significance of the events of the Passion, taking the stress away from Jesus’ suffering and humiliation, and laying it on his triumph. Ultimately, Jesus will die only when he has completed his mission, and hands over his Spirit to the newly-formed Christian community of Mary and the Beloved Disciple. In this scene the Jewish authorities have denounced Jesus as claiming to be king of the Jews, not knowing how true that claim is. Jesus declares that his kingdom is no earthly kingdom, but is far more powerful and meaningful. By his statement he invites Pilate to declare himself for the truth, as any judge should do. Now Pilate three times declares Jesus innocent, but at the same time makes a mockery of himself, as he stands before Truth itself, and asks what is truth. Then he seats Jesus on the Judgement Seat, robed and crowned as a king. The religious leaders (standing in front of Jesus who is enthroned as judge and king) deny themselves and undermine their faith by declaring, ‘We have no king but Caesar’. It is not Caesar, but God who is their true king. **In what sense is Jesus a King? Why does this festival of Christ as King come at the end of the Church’s year?**

# 4

## Pray for Families

**This Wednesday’s word for our school families is LEADER !**

After praying for your loved ones, please remember to pray for our present and future Church, particularly for the families connected to our schools. You may want to conclude this special weekly time with a simple prayer such as:

**St Joseph, Patron Saint of Families and Protector of the Church, pray for us. Mary, Star of Evangelisation, pray for us. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.**

*Dom Henry Wansbrough OSB*

# WEDNESDAY WORD PLUS †

Fr Henry's reflections on the first and second readings of **Sunday 24th November 2024**



**1st Reading: Daniel 7:13-14**

## One Like a Son of Man

I gazed into the visions of the night. And I saw, coming on the clouds of heaven, one like a son of man. He came to the one of great age and was led into his presence. On him was conferred sovereignty, glory and kingship, and men of all peoples, nations and languages became his servants. His sovereignty is an eternal sovereignty which shall never pass away, nor will his empire be destroyed.



This prophecy of Daniel was written in the dark days of the Syrian persecution of Judaism a couple of centuries before Christ. First the empires which persecuted Judaism are described under the imagery of ravening beasts which tear their prey to pieces. Then the prophet presents this altogether different image of a noble human being on whom God confers all power and sovereignty on earth. In the original vision this human figure is the personification of the Jews, 'the holy ones of the Most High', who will be freed from persecution and exalted to glory. In the New Testament this prophecy is applied to Jesus. This mysterious expression 'son of man' there describes Jesus' authority on earth to forgive sins and to prescribe rules for Sabbath observance. Daniel's 'son of man' is invoked also to soften the prophecy of the suffering and death by which the Lord Jesus will achieve his final resurrection. In the final commission of the Risen Christ to his disciples in Matthew Jesus goes even further: to him has been given all authority both in heaven and on earth, and in this power he sends out his apostles, promising that he will be with them always.

**What does it mean to describe Jesus as "the Son of Man"?**

He is the beginning and end of all things.



**2nd Reading: Revelation 1:5-8**

## The Lord of The Church

Jesus Christ is the faithful witness, the First-born from the dead, the Ruler of the kings of the earth. He loves us and has washed away our sins with his blood, and made us a line of kings, priests to serve his God and Father; to him, then, be glory and power for ever and ever. Amen. It is he who is coming on the clouds; everyone will see him, even those who pierced him, and all the races of the earth will mourn over him. This is the truth. Amen. "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, who is, who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.



The Book of Revelation opens with a vision of the Risen Christ as Lord. This passage is rich in quotations from the Old Testament, allusions to several texts in the Bible which express the dignity, power and sovereignty belonging to Christ. He is described even in divine terms, the first and last letters of the alphabet signifying that he is the beginning and end of all things, their origin and their goal; he spans the whole extent of time, past, present and future. More specifically, also, in his glorified humanity, Christ is the Lord of the Church, since he has taken the Church to himself, cleansed it, and made it a Kingdom of Priests to serve God. This too is a biblical expression, for Israel is described as a royal priesthood (which will find its fulfilment in the Church). Like the prophecy of Daniel, the Book of Revelation was written in a time of persecution, to assure the persecuted faithful that they were safe in the protection of God, whose power would eventually prevail to rescue them and bring them to triumph and security.

**In what sense is Christ the 'Lord of the Church'?**

**The Wednesday Word** Connecting Home, School & Parish through the Word of God

**The Wednesday Word is under the patronage of St Joseph, Patron Saint of Families and Protector of the Church  
Within the tradition of the Catholic Church, each Wednesday is dedicated to St Joseph**