

November 20, 2020

This Sunday we end the Church Year as always with the Feast of Christ the King, but now with the rather newly grandiose title of The Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe.

The Gospel story this weekend, Matthew 26 and following, erroneously called, Last Judgement, works extremely hard to make sure that we understand that Jesus Christ is present right here in the daily details of our life but I suppose well meaning clerics would rather get Jesus Christ out there as in a space ship floating high above the details of our lives together.

That title more likely, as much in our world in recent times, probably, had its origin in someone, an ambitious cleric, no doubt, who wasn't loved as he, and I think it has to be a "he," as he needed to be when he was between the ages of about 11-15.

King of the Universe doesn't leave much more room for anyone above you and while there are lots of folks, mostly men I would bet, who aspire to be King of the Universe, I have a hard time seeing Jesus Christ being one of them.

Ending the Church Year means that we begin anew Church Year and the rituals that mark this transition in Catholic Tradition and in the imagination of many Christians is called Advent from the Latin "adventus" derived from "advenire," to-come, related directly to adventurus, which underlies our English word, adventure.

So let's let the King of the Universe do whatever it is the Universe Kings do and let us try and do Advent which will be tough because while we will have the symbols both in and outside of our church where they can be seen virtually, most of you will not be there and in my mind and heart symbols without a real community to embrace them are just stuff, so we have to work harder than ever this year to let our Advent wreaths mark the weeks with their candles casting light in this strange and fearful darkness both inside and outside of many of us.

Make your own Advent wreath, it can be just 4 candles, any color, there are no real rules. Arrange them as four points on a circle which is an ancient symbol of Divine Perfection emerging in a world of angular imperfection.

If you do not have greens, improvise, colored paper has served well over the years, or cut the front page of a newspaper into a circle.

If you have just one candle, use it and set it somewhere special and leave it there until Christmas, light it as the sun goes down or the sun comes up or both or light it whenever you want, let it become for you your way, your family's way, your households way of not letting the darkness overcome you.

Say a prayer with words or without, any prayer will do.

My grandmother, as many grandmothers, used to light a candle whenever there was a bad lightning and thunder, maybe a bit too superstitious for our sophisticated age, maybe not, but the burning candle gave her some kind of consolation and hope and, God knows we need consolation and hope, so "do" Advent as a sign of hope and let your light shine before others who might have begun to lose hope and are in need of consolation.

By the way, my grandmother was never struck by lightning.