

Feast of Jesus Christ, the King
Nov. 21 & 22, 2015

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My dear Brothers and Sisters.

This weekend we celebrate the feast of Christ the King, and in that frame, of course, we also celebrate the Kingdom of God. You know, that Kingdom of God to which we refer to in the most wonderful prayer we have from Jesus, the Our Father, where we pray 'Your kingdom come'. It is very easy to misunderstand in the XXI-st century what kingdom should mean because today many nations live in some form of nominal democracy or alternatively in a situation of a form of power where the true interest of the people is disregarded to various degrees.

Jesus used many parables to help us to understand the true meaning of God's Kingdom: The parable of the mustard seed, and the yeast, and the hidden treasure, and the precious pearl. These parables speak of a process of growth toward something new, or the sequence of events leading to something most wonderful beyond all imagination and all previous experience. 'What shall I compare the Kingdom of God?', says Jesus.

My dear Sisters and Brothers. Just as in scientific work one has to be very careful to see clearly the differences between fact and fiction, so it is with God's Kingdom of which Jesus said: 'It is already here among you.' I would like to consider just one aspect of God's Kingdom: and that is its realness. There are some factors which are hostile to this realism. One is that God's kingdom is something static, unchanging. In reality, as indicated by Jesus' parables, the Kingdom of God is in an unfolding dynamic process of growth toward fulfillment in each of us. The other hostile factor is the idea that the Kingdom of God for us is an exclusively spiritual reality, without the negative weight of material things. Pope Francis spoke forcefully about these errors to the Italian church gathering in Rome on November 10 this year. He said: 'We are not living an era of change but a change of era. And he also spoke out clearly against the old heresy of Gnosticism, which widely held that people should shun the material world in favor of the spiritual realm. We say in the Apostles creed, I believe in the resurrection of the body and life everlasting. It is the strategy of evil to try to divide and conquer; to divide human life into spirit and body, then to identify these as good and evil, and set them against each other in a mortal combat trying to destroy our created humanity. The use of the created given of which God said 'It is good' is good. What is evil is its abuse that destroys.

One could say, as in a parable, that the Kingdom of God is like a seed in the ground that changes by growing roots and obtaining moisture and nourishment to be able to break the earth with one or two green leaves, open to the energy of the sun, and so be alive and become a flower with new seeds in it which are all a bit different from the one of which they came forth. And so life goes on, always changing in a changing world, and always in balance with the world the earth provides. If we refuse to change as God provides, and do not respond to present needs with present knowledge, we become dysfunctional, and lose credibility, and do damage to faith.

My dear Sisters and Brothers. The kingdom of God, is a world of truth and light, where there is no more death and fear is unknown. A world of love, and peace, and justice, and a deep joy in the life giving presence of God. May God's Kingdom come. In so many ways, it is already here among us. So I pray: Jesus, my King, and my God, and my Good Shepherd! We love You, and we know that you love us. Please, help us to advance your Kingdom more and more. Amen.