

# Solemnity of Christ the King:

## The Year in Review = 2020

34<sup>th</sup> (last) Sunday of the Year – Year A

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*Ezekiel 34:11-12, 15-17*  
*Psalms 23:1-2, 2-3, 5-6*

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*1 Corinthians 15:20-26, 28*  
*Matthew 25:31-46*

On the First Sunday of Advent, we will begin the New Year and the Church gets a five-week head start on 2021. Now, however, with the Solemnity of Christ the King, as the current Liturgical Year celebrates its final Sunday, it is appropriate to look back on where we have come during Liturgical Year, 2020.

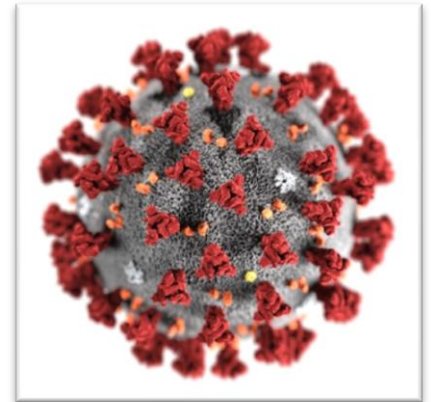
*Where to start!!!*

First, and perhaps foremost, we were a Church in lockdown! During the Covid-19 pandemic our churches were empty for many weeks. We were kept in a constant state of un-  
surety as "scientific" information was reported and, more often than not, tossed around at a frenzied pace, frequently contradicting itself, leading to a great fear of the disease that gripped a great many in our nation and throughout the world, and a growing un-  
surety and distrust of those "scientific experts" entrusted with communicating to a anxious population.

In the midst of this pandemic, many sought to find solace in their faith. However, other by-products of the pandemic eventually developed that proved a hindrance to the very faith from which we look for consolation in times of crisis, as places of worship faced severe limits to the practice of our religious faith, with legal ramifications for any violations; an outright attack on our rights as Americans, all in the name of "public health."

Here, in San Francisco, a city named for a Catholic Saint, we be-

came subject to draconian standards that targeted the Churches in particular, as city officials, while allowing for less stringent restrictions in other venues, nonetheless used the pandemic as an excuse to greatly limit, if not outright cease the worship life of the Catholic Church. Yet, with the patient leadership of our Archbishop, and a little backing from the United States Justice Department, we are on our way to what we hope will soon be full restoration of the worship life of the Church as we move closer and closer to more effective treatments for the prevention of Covid-19, the care of those who suffer from it, as well, and perhaps more importantly, overcoming the great fear that has crippled so many in our society because of it.



In the midst of the frenzy over the pandemic, the very History, both of our Church and of the Nation in which we freely exercise our faith, came under attack as statues of both national heroes and Catholic Saints throughout the country were torn down by violent demonstrators, driven by hatred and ignorance, teaming with an un-forgiveness and

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## The Solemnity of Christ the King, 2020 -- A Year in Review

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complete indifference to how we have overcome the sins of our past; gestures that have affected us here in the Bay Area as statues of St. Junipero Serra, the Apostle to California, were desecrated in Golden Gate Park and Mission San Raphael. Fires that have heavily damaged the holy site of San Gabriel Mission further reminded us of the forces of evil, both human and beyond, that continually threaten us as Followers of Christ.

At the same time, 2020 may have been a year of great blessings and important events, uplifting or sad, but deep in matters of faith and signs that God continues to be present to do His work among us. After, all, it is in times of great crisis that the greatest saints have emerged, and we may have had the privilege of seeing such people at work, and such events unfold.

Early in the year, we witnessed for the first time in history, the President of the United States speak personally at the Walk for Life in Washington, D.C., lending his support in the fight to protect the most precious gift we have, especially in the most vulnerable among us. We have seen our parishes scramble to find new ways to make the Mass accessible to people at home, even as we had to endure a temporary physical distance from the Eucharist itself.

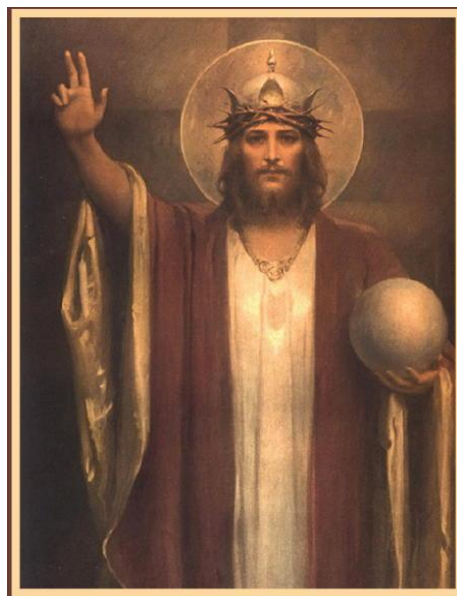
As many, pandemic and social distancing did not stop us from finding ways to deepen our faith at home. Some of us may have used the time of lockdown to build up the domestic Church, so that, now, the observance of our faith going forward into 2021 will be so much more than the Sunday



mass that nourishes it, but truly a faith that makes use of the Eucharist to live more fully the faith we profess both at work, and with our families in the home.

For many, Liturgical Year, 2020 saw the arrival of a new member of the family, who received Christ and was received into the Church through the Sacrament of Baptism. For people in the RCIA and students in our schools and CCD programs, 2020 was the year in which they received full initiation through the Sacrament of Confirmation. Others during the past year entered into Communion in Christ's Body and Blood for the first time. Still others saw a beloved friend or family member enter a new state in life in the Sacrament of Matrimony. Liturgical Year 2020 saw the ordination of young men to the Holy Order of Priests, while some men and women gave themselves to profession in the religious life. Alas, some, during 2020 were, we pray, received into God's Kingdom, as family and as Church, we said our sad, but hopeful farewells.

I, for one, will not be sorry to see the back side of 2020. As a Catholic, preparing to begin a new Liturgical Year, I am eager to get our annual five-week head start on 2021. As we celebrate the Feast of Christ the King, however, let us look back on our journey of 2020 and see how far we have come, where we have failed, how we have grown (*if we have grown*) and where we need to go, as we enter Liturgical Year 2021, moving closer to that day when Christ our King will come again in glory.



Fr. Bill Nicholas  
November 22, 2020