

Thy Kingdom Come!

NOVENA OF CHRIST THE KING

November 13–21

REGNUM CHRISTI

The Image of Christ the King

An image to contemplate Christ the King. The illustration was produced by a process of personal drawing and digital painting, seeking to preserve the spontaneity and expressivity characteristic of a handmade work. The peaceful, loving face of Christ appears in profile, inviting us to fix our eyes on him and to recognize in him the true center of our lives and our mission.

The crown, the central element of the composition, was created using a golden texture with a cropping filter. Its materiality and imperfect lines are intended to distance it from an overly solemn or distant representation: The crown is simple yet rich in meaning, reminding us that **Christ's reign is not imposed by force, but transforms from the heart.**



Calendar of the Novena

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Day **1**
The Long-Expected King

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Day **2**
The Poor and Humble King

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Day **3**
The Meek King

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Day **4**
The King of Justice

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Day **5**
The King of Eternal Life

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Day **6**
The King Who Redeems

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Day **7**
The King of Peace

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Day **8**
The King of Mercy

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Day **9**
The King of Kings

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The Day of
Christ the King

Day 1

℣. The Lord reigns, robed in majesty.
℟. The Lord reigns, robed in majesty.
℣. The earth holds firm; it does not waver.
Your throne has stood firm from all ages,
and you are everlasting.
℟. The Lord reigns, robed in majesty.

OPENING PRAYER

Lord Jesus Christ,
King of the universe and of our hearts, you came to reconcile all things to yourself and to establish the Kingdom of truth and life, of holiness and grace, of justice, love, and peace. We acknowledge you as our only Lord, and we desire that you reign in our lives, in our families, and in society. Grant us the grace to live in fraternal communion, collaborating in the mission of making your Kingdom present with joy, self-giving, and fidelity. By following your example of humility and service, may we work to build a more just and fraternal society, in which all people may recognize your lordship and find true peace in you. **Amen.**

GOSPEL (Luke 1:30–33)

Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father; **and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end**."

REFLECTION

Jesus Christ is the long-expected King, the promised Messiah. In him alone is found the true light, the hope of salvation from a God who reveals his majesty by making himself present among us, showing us his face, and dwelling within those who open their hearts to him. "For if we remain in his love, he comes to dwell in us and our life will become a temple of God. His love enlightens us, influences the way we think and act, spreads outwards to others and embraces every situation in our lives" (Pope Leo XIV, *Regina Caeli*, May 25, 2025). Just like at the Annunciation, that long-expected King still needs the "yes" of his creatures in order to establish his eternal Kingdom in our hearts and in society.

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord, grant us a pure heart so that we may see your face, recognize you, and embrace your Kingdom in our lives.

Christ our King,
Thy Kingdom Come!

Day 2

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GOSPEL (Matthew 2:1–2)

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of King Herod, behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, "**Where is the newborn king of the Jews?** We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage."

REFLECTION

In Jesus Christ, we contemplate the mystery of a God who became poor although he was rich, so that by his poverty we might become rich (cf. 2 Cor 8:9). By taking our humanity upon himself, he shares with us his richness: his boundless trust in God the Father. He invites us to share in his filial and fraternal spirit and to make us sons and daughters in the Son, brothers and sisters in the Firstborn Brother (cf. Rom 8:29). "God is merciful love, and his plan of love, which unfolds and is fulfilled in history, is above all his descent and coming among us to free us from slavery, fear, sin and the power of death. Addressing their human condition with a merciful gaze and a heart full of love, he turned to his creatures and thus took care of their poverty. Precisely in order to share the limitations and fragility of our human nature, he himself became poor and was born in the flesh like us. We came to know him in the smallness of a child laid in a manger and in the extreme humiliation of the cross, where he shared our radical poverty, which is death" (Pope Leo XIV, *Dilexi te*, 16). Jesus' preferential option for the poor reveals to us the majesty of a God who is "moved by compassion toward the poverty and weakness of all humanity. Wanting to inaugurate a kingdom of justice, fraternity and solidarity, God has a special place in his heart for those who are discriminated against and oppressed, and he asks us, his Church, to make a decisive and radical choice in favor of the weakest" (Pope Leo XIV, *Dilexi te*, 16).

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus Christ, poor and humble King, help us to realize how much we need you and to discover your face in those who suffer. Make us "poor in spirit" so that, trusting in you, we may become true witnesses to your love for the smallest and most in need.

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GOSPEL (John 12:13–15)

They took palm branches and went out to meet him, and cried out: "Hosanna! **Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, the king of Israel**." Jesus found an ass and sat upon it, as is written: "Fear no more, O daughter Zion; see, your king comes, seated upon an ass's colt."

REFLECTION

With his triumphant yet humble entrance into Jerusalem, Jesus teaches us that his Kingdom does not expand by the strength of weapons or power, but with the meekness of the truth that convinces from within. Meekness is not weakness, but the interior strength that conquers evil without resorting to violence. The majesty of Christ is the meekness of self-giving love: a tender, affectionate love that does not impose itself, but rather attracts, transforms, and conquers hearts. "He is King of hearts, too, by reason of his 'charity which exceedeth all knowledge.' And his mercy and kindness which draw all men to him, for never has it been known, nor will it ever be, that man be loved so much and so universally as Jesus Christ" (Pope Pius XI, *Quas primas*, 7).

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, make our hearts meek and humble like yours, so that, captivated by your love and clothed in your goodness and sweetness, we may become instruments of your peace in the world and receive the inheritance of your Kingdom.

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GOSPEL (Matthew 25:31–36)

When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit upon his glorious throne, and all the nations will be assembled before him. And he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will place the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. Then the king will say to those on his right, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me."

REFLECTION

Christ is King of justice. His law is charity. His form of governance: complete self-giving love. The measure of his justice: love for our neighbor. In Christ, justice is lived as mercy and solidarity that invites us to recognize and serve him in those most in need. Thus, his majesty is manifested in the power of love that transforms and dignifies each person. "'As you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.' These words never cease to move us, because they reveal the extent to which God's love goes: up to the point of taking flesh, but not when we are well, when we are healthy and happy, no; but when we are in need. And in this hidden way he allows himself to be encountered; he reaches out his hand to us as a mendicant. In this way Jesus reveals the decisive criterion of his judgment, namely, concrete love for a neighbour in difficulty. And in this way the power of love, the kingship of God is revealed: in solidarity with those who suffer in order to engender everywhere compassion and works of mercy" (Pope Francis, *Angelus*, November 26, 2017).

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus Christ, King of justice, make us always thirst and hunger for your justice, so that we are able to recognize and serve you in those most in need, and thus, fulfilled by your love, we may build up your Kingdom on earth.

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GOSPEL (John 18:35–37)

"Your own nation and the chief priests handed you over to me. What have you done?" Jesus answered, "**My kingdom does not belong to this world.** If my kingdom did belong to this world, my attendants would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not here." So Pilate said to him, "Then you are a king?" Jesus answered, "**You say I am a king. For this I was born and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth.**"

REFLECTION

Christ's kingship goes beyond human parameters. "Jesus is King, but his kingdom is not of Pilate's world, and not of this world either. Jesus' world, indeed, is the new world, the eternal world, which God prepares for all by giving his life for our salvation. It is the kingdom of heaven, which Christ brings to this earth by pouring out grace and truth" (Pope Francis, *Angelus*, November 24, 2024). The Kingdom of Christ is love. It is a spiritual Kingdom that is incarnated into the world and seeks to reign in our hearts so as to give us eternal life. "Yet this is possible only because it is not a kingship of political power, but is based solely on the free adherence of love – a love which, for its part, is a response to the love of Jesus Christ who gave himself for all" (Pope Benedict XVI, Homily for Palm Sunday, April 5, 2009).

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus Christ, help us to live according to the truth of your Kingdom, which invites us to go beyond human logic and securities, to be courageous and creative, and to remain in your love so as to make you present in the world.

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GOSPEL (Matthew 27:27–29)

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus inside the praetorium and gathered the whole cohort around him. They stripped off his clothes and threw a scarlet military cloak about him. Weaving a crown out of thorns, they placed it on his head, and a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying, "**Hail, King of the Jews!**"

REFLECTION

Christ has dominion over all creatures not only because he is the Son of God, but also because he has redeemed us with his blood (cf. Pope Pius XI, *Quas primas*, 13). "He embraces our death, our pain, our poverty, our weakness. [...] He became a slave so that each of us could become a son. By his becoming a slave, he purchased our sonship. He let himself be insulted and derided, so that whenever we are brought low, we will never feel alone. He let himself be stripped of his garments, so that no one would ever feel stripped of his or her rightful dignity. He ascended the cross, so that God would be present in every crucified man or woman throughout history. This is our king, the king of the universe, for he journeyed to the furthest confines of our human experience, entered into the black hole of hatred, the black hole of abandonment, in order to bring light to every life and to embrace all reality" (Pope Francis, Homily, November 20, 2022).

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus Christ, you embraced our sin in order to redeem it. Enable us to accompany and console those who suffer and to experience true sorrow for your offenses so that, restored by your mercy and forgiveness, we may experience the joy of salvation.

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GOSPEL (John 19:17–19)

And carrying the cross himself he went out to what is called the Place of the Skull, in Hebrew, Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus in the middle. Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, "**Jesus the Nazorean, the King of the Jews.**"

REFLECTION

On the cross, Jesus reveals himself as the King of peace. He does not govern seated on a throne of power, but one of love and mercy that brings together heaven and earth. He is not crowned with the glory of gold, but with the thorns of our sins. The cross is the chair of peace. From there, Jesus teaches us a peace that does not dominate, but rather edifies history by transforming hearts. "It is the peace of the risen Christ. A peace that is unarmed and disarming, humble and persevering. A peace that comes from God, the God who loves us all, unconditionally" (Pope Leo XIV, *Urbi et orbi*, May 8, 2025). "Oh, what happiness would be ours if all men, individuals, families, and nations, would but let themselves be governed by Christ! [...] Then at length will many evils be cured; then will the law regain its former authority; peace with all its blessings be restored. Men will sheathe their swords and lay down their arms when all freely acknowledge and obey the authority of Christ, and every tongue confesses that the Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of God the Father" (Pope Pius XI, *Quas primas*, 20).

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus Christ, help us to acknowledge your kingship in our lives in order that, having found true peace in you, we may become builders of peace, so that you might reign in the world.

Christ our King,
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Day 8

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GOSPEL (Luke 23:39–43)

Now one of the criminals hanging there reviled Jesus, saying, "Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us." The other, however, rebuking him, said in reply, "Have you no fear of God, for you are subject to the same condemnation? And indeed, we have been condemned justly, for the sentence we received corresponds to our crimes, but this man has done nothing criminal." Then he said, "**Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.**" He replied to him, "Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

REFLECTION

From the throne of the cross, Jesus reveals his majesty as the King of mercy, proving that sin does not have the final word and that "God's mercy has imposed a limit on evil" (St. John Paul II, *Memory and Identity*). Mercy opens the heart to the hope of being loved forever and unconditionally: "Mercy: the bridge that connects God and man, opening our hearts to the hope of being loved forever despite our sinfulness" (Pope Francis, *Misericordiae vultus*, 2). "It is precisely in the failure of sin — sin is a failure — in the failure of human ambitions: the triumph of the Cross is there, the gratuitousness of love is there. In the failure of the Cross, love is seen, a love that is gratuitous, which Jesus gives us. (…) The kingship of Jesus doesn't oppress us, but rather frees us from our weaknesses and miseries, encouraging us to walk the path of the good, of reconciliation and of forgiveness" (Pope Francis, *Angelus*, November 22, 2015).

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus Christ, help us to open ourselves to the grace of your love, which is always greater than our sin, and give us a merciful heart that makes your Kingdom present in this world with gestures of tenderness, empathy, and love.

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Day 9

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READING (Revelation 17:14)

They will fight with the Lamb, but the Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and **king of kings**, and those with him are called, chosen, and faithful.

REFLECTION

"Love always conquers. Love always conquers, just as Christ has conquered! Love always conquers, though at times, in some events and concrete situations, he might seem powerless to us. Christ seemed powerless on the cross! God can always do more!" (St. John Paul II, *Message to Youth*, Chile, 1987) Jesus Christ, the King of kings, the Lamb who from the cross has gained the Kingdom for all people, teaches us that his power is love, his majesty is that of the Beatitudes, and fidelity to the Gospel is the path toward true happiness: happiness of the clean of heart, the poor in spirit, the meek, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, those who weep, the peacemakers, the merciful, and those persecuted for the sake of righteousness. "Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil against you falsely because of me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven" (Mt 5:11–12).

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus Christ, King of kings, help us to open ourselves to your grace so that, transformed by your love, we may walk along the path of the Beatitudes so that you might reign in our lives and that we might thus collaborate in building up a more just, fraternal, and supportive world, in which all people can experience the joy of your Kingdom.

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