

## SECTION 3

# CHRIST THE KING SUNDAY LITURGICAL GUIDE

## **Celebrating Youth and Young Adults on the Solemnity of Christ the King**

*NOTE: When “young people” is used in the text below, it refers generally to both youth (13-18) and young adults (18-39); however, for pastoral reasons, the local community may wish to designate or differentiate between these age groups. It may be helpful, at the beginning of the Mass or in materials available to the assembly (such as a worship aid, screens, or bulletins), to explain to worshippers what “young people” mean when this term is used, as well as what “youth” or “young adult” specifically refers to in this context.*

### ENTRANCE AND GREETING: WELCOMING AND INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Typically, celebrants will want to provide a brief welcome that connects the celebration of the day with a taste of the readings that will momentarily be proclaimed. Celebrants can introduce the liturgy using the main theme or Scripture passage from the Pope’s annual message for young people.

Invite the congregation to look around and realize the beauty and the goodness of bringing young people together in this wonderful occasion to celebrate in spiritual communion with the Church and the young around the world.

The Vatican Dicastery for Family, Laity and Life provided the following words that can be included in the greeting, as a lens of celebration for young people and Christ the King:

Receive Christ! Welcome him as King into your lives! He is a King who came to save! Without him there is no true peace, no true inner reconciliation, and no true reconciliation with others! Without his Kingdom, society too loses its human face. Without the Kingdom of Christ, all true fraternity and all genuine proximity to those who suffer will disappear. (12)

What is important is to set the tone in a pastoral manner, modeling the approach the Church should take in engaging young people throughout the year. As Pope Francis notes, “We need to make all our institutions better equipped to be more welcoming of young people” (CV 216) and “young people need to be approached with the grammar of love, not by being preached at. The language that young people understand is spoken by those who radiate life, by those who are there for them and with them.” (CV 211).

**A pastoral tone should infuse the spirit of the welcoming and introductory remarks on Christ the King Sunday, not to mention the other Sundays of the year.**

## PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

The Word of God is essential to the liturgy, and therefore special care should be employed in identifying and training young people to step into the role of the proclamation of the Word, “the richness of the sacred Scriptures” which “often speak of young people and of how the Lord draws near to encounter them.” (CV 5)

If there are young people (youth or young adults) who are properly trained and comfortable with proclamation of the Word, it is ideal to schedule them for the liturgies on Christ the King Sunday. Other churches may wish to use a mentoring model (encouraging an older individual, trained in lecturing, to accompany and support a young person who has been identified to read for the Mass). Another model is having seasoned young people (other youth or young adults) walk with their peers in training them to proclaim Scripture.

Prior to Christ the King Sunday, it is advisable for pastoral leaders to help young people in liturgical roles, especially lectors, understand the context of the readings through Bible Study or small group discussions about the passages. It is best to use the lectio divina resources available, in English and in Spanish, at <https://catholic.bible/>.

The readings for Christ the King Sunday are as follows:

### YEAR A: (2023, 2026, 2029, 2032, 2035, 2038, 2041, 2044)

- Ez 34:11-12, 15-17 (“The lost I will seek out, the strayed I will bring back, the injured I will bind up...”)
- Ps 23:1-2, 2-3, 5-6 (“The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.”)
- 1 Cor 15:20-26, 28 (“Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.”)
- Mt 25:31-46 (“Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink?”)

### YEAR B: (2021, 2024, 2027, 2030, 2033, 2036, 2039, 2042)

- Dn 7:13-14 (“I saw one like a Son of Man coming, on the clouds of heaven.”)
- Ps 93:1, 1-2, 5 (“The Lord is king; he is robed in majesty.”)
- Rv 1:5-8 (“I am the Alpha and the Omega... the one who is and who was and who is to come, the almighty.”)
- Jn 18:33b-37 (“Pilate said to Jesus, ‘Are you the King of the Jews?’”)

### YEAR C: (2022, 2025, 2028, 2031, 2034, 2037, 2040, 2043)

- 2 Sm 5:1-3 (“King David made an agreement with them before the Lord, and they anointed him king...”)
- Ps 122:1-2, 3-4, 4-5 (“Let us go rejoicing to the house of the Lord.”)
- Col 1:12-20 (“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.”)
- Lk 23:35-43 (“Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.”)

## HOMILY AND SMALL GROUP NOTES (YEAR A, YEAR B, YEAR C)

The following may be used as a guide for presiders in preparing homilies in how they might fit to the universal celebration of youth and young adults throughout the Church. Further integration of the specific theme of the year (provided by the Holy See prior to Christ the King Sunday) is also recommended. What follows are ideas with a more general approach between the solemnity and young people.

As the final Sunday of the liturgical year celebrates the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, we are given us a nuanced image of Christ the King with each passing year, but all contain images that can attract the hearts of young people.

The idea of a “king” does not readily connect with our contemporary ears, especially in the United States, and yet on this day, we celebrate the kingship of Christ over the universe. The key to connecting the readings of Christ the King with this day for youth and young adults, is the same as others: it is all about relationships. Thus, what we are presented with in the Gospels is Jesus, the king, who does not lord his position over creation, but rather, inspires us to follow him in a spirit of servant leadership.

### YEAR A

EZ 34:11-12, 15-17

Ps 23: 1-2, 2-3, 5-6

1 COR 15:20-26, 28

MT 25:31-46

The first reading from Ezekiel (Ez 34:11-12, 15-17) focuses on the “scattered sheep” (Ez 34:12), noting how God will pasture his flock and give them rest, seek those who are lost, injured, or sick, and, ultimately, hold them accountable. The Psalm response (Ps 23:1-2, 2-3, 5-6) continues that theme, as the Psalmist reflects on the experience of the one protected and guided by the Lord as a shepherd, and the Gospel reading (Mt 25:31-46) is an account of Jesus’ words in which he describes his kingly role “as a shepherd” (Mt 25:32) separating the sheep and goats.

The imagery of the shepherd and the sheep is one that can connect to young people. Youth and young adults today can often feel lost, hurt, or suffering, akin to the sheep Ezekiel describes. Loneliness, physical and mental health concerns, past and present pains inflicted by older generations and religious authorities, and the experiences of searching for identity, purpose, and meaning are all elements of the journey for many young people.

By helping youth and young adults better know and feel loved by Christ the King, who like the shepherd “will give them rest” (Ez 34:15) and gives repose, leading them to restful waters (cf. Ps 23:2), we can offer young people a sense of hope in the midst of their struggles and daily realities. This is a powerful message to offer on the solemnity, echoed by Pope Francis in *Christus Vivit*: “May all young people who are suffering feel the closeness of a Christian community that can reflect (Jesus’) words by its actions, its embrace, and its concrete help.” (CV 77)

In addition, the Gospel also speaks of the accountability that Jesus demands: “For I was hungry, and you gave me food, I was thirsty, and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me.” (Mt 25:35) This passage invites listeners, including young people, to think of their own participation in the royal priesthood of believers, with a call to serve all humanity, particularly the most humble and lowly.

In some respects, the message is also a challenge to all generations to consider how they approach youth and young adults, especially those we do not yet know (like the “stranger” that Jesus speaks about in Mt 25:35). Have we welcomed them, given them rest and refuge like the shepherd (cf. Ez 34)? Or have we neglected or ignored them?

The focus on outreach to those impoverished, alone, and afraid is a call to old and young alike to consider how they live out their baptismal calling as participants in Christ as “priest, prophet, and king” in service to the world. This can be a wonderful opportunity to reflect on ambition and power, and what it truly means to be “in charge” like a king; the Gospel points to a king that calls for radical compassion and action towards those on the peripheries of society, when “in Christ shall all be brought to life,” as St. Paul notes (1 Cor 15:22) in this week’s second reading.

In each cycle, the Solemnity of Christ the King upends our expectations of ambition, power, and authority. This set of readings point to the compassionate work of the shepherd king, and our work at following the Lord’s lead in humbly listening and serving one another, and in a particular way to youth and young adults in our midst.

## YEAR B

DN 7:13-14

Ps 93:1, 1-2, 5

REV 1:5-8

JN 18:33B-37

The central focus of these readings for the Solemnity of Christ the King is the notion of identity. In the Gospel (Jn 18:33b-37), Pontius Pilate asks Jesus about his identity: “Are you the King of the Jews?” (Jn 18:33) and in the other readings, the authors of those texts offer testimony about the Lord’s identity as a king.

For young people, the quest for self-discovery is particularly important. The U.S. Bishops noted in their pastoral plan on ministry with young adults that “while individuals continue to mature throughout life, various new experiences influence the development of personal identity.”<sup>1</sup> These are significant years of growth and decision-making, as they develop physically, socially, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually - becoming who God made them to be. Yet social media, cultural colonization, various pressures, and life among their peers can influence them to mask their true selves, hide or neglect their cultural heritage, create illusions of self-control, or revert to negative habits.

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<sup>1</sup> United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Sons and Daughters of the Light: A Pastoral Plan for Ministry with Young Adults*. Washington DC: USCCB Publishing, 1996. Part One, Section 1, “Tasks of Young Adulthood,” paragraph 2.

A homily can reflect on Jesus' identity as a servant king and connect that with the journey that youth and young adults are taking as they reflect on their own identity. Jesus' kingship is not one of earthly power and authority, but one of humility and meekness, as he says "My kingdom does not belong to this world" in Jn 18:35). Christ's kingship goes beyond human understanding of the word and his identity is greater than reputation, assumption, or projection could ever envision. In much the same way, our identity as a beloved son or daughter of God is greater than human words can describe. Young people may worry about the way they are perceived, or that the actions of their past will define them, yet God's kingdom and his definition of "identity" is greater than these worldly conditions.

The prophet Daniel (in Dn 7:13-14) and the Psalmist (in Ps 93:1, 1-2, 5) describe the Lord as "one like a Son of Man coming, on the clouds of heaven" (Dn 7:13) or as "in splendor robed... girt about with strength" (Ps 93:1). The author of Revelation (in Rv 1:5-8) shares his experience seeing Christ in his heavenly kingdom who proclaims his universal identity: "I am the Alpha and the Omega... the one who is and who was and who is to come, the almighty" (Rv 1:8). Yet, as the Gospel reminds us, this power and might is at the service of those who are most lowly, the most hurt, and the most afraid.

When youth or young adults themselves feel downtrodden and weak, uncertain of themselves (as many do feel), it is helpful for homilists to share the news that they indeed have a savior who is powerful beyond imagination, who wants to help them out of their depths. As Pope noted, "if you have lost your inner vitality, your dreams, your enthusiasm, your optimism, and your generosity, Jesus stands before you as once he stood before the dead son of the widow, and with all the power of his resurrection, he urges you: 'Young man, I say to you, arise!' (Lk 7:14)" (CV 20). Homilists can project a similar encouragement to the young people in their midst, inviting them to see Christ as the king who raises them up from their lowliness and gives them a renewed identity and purpose for life.

Homilists can invite young people to consider the most integral part of their own identity; one that challenges cultural norms: their identity as a Christian. It brings with it rights and responsibilities. To embrace one's identity as a Christian is to go against norms and expectations of others, and consider first the poor and those suffering, putting the needs of others before oneself, and seeing Christ present in all people.

To follow in the footsteps of Christ the King, we must look to his identity as a servant leader and embrace the attitudes of his sacred heart: compassion, respect, forgiveness, generosity, courage, confidence, and integrity. And when we do so, we "put on Christ" (cf. Rm 13:14) for the life of the world.

## YEAR C

2 Sm 5:1-3

Ps 122:1-2, 3-4, 4-5

COL 1:12-20

LK 23:35-43

Once again upending expectations, the readings for this cycle of Christ the King Sunday give us insight around vulnerability, an interesting perspective on a feast celebrating the power and might of the Almighty.

In the first reading (2 Sm 5:1-3), the elders of the tribes of Israel admitted their vulnerability as a nation, saw God at work in a young man (David), and anointed him their king (cf. 2 Sm 5:3).

In the second reading (Col 1:12-20), St. Paul admits our vulnerability as humans, as we need God to deliver us “from the power of darkness” (1 Col 1:13) and provide us with forgiveness and redemption (cf. 1 Col 1:14).

In the Gospel reading (Lk 23:35-43), Jesus is at his most vulnerable moment: on the cross, stripped and hanging for all the world to see, including his executioners and the criminals beside him. He endures taunting from the passers-by who sneer “He saved others, let him save himself the chosen one, the Christ of God” (Lk 23:35).

Vulnerability is not something many people revel in, and yet on the Solemnity of Christ, king of the universe, we are invited to reflect on this concept. We are asked to sit in uncomfortable situations and admit or face our weaknesses. The most common Christian image is the cross, a symbol of death and dying, the epitome of vulnerability.

Youth and young adults (and those of any age group) can often fear moments of vulnerability. We want to assert our power and control over any given situation, for fear of going someplace uncomfortable and painful. Yet on the Solemnity of Christ the King, we are shown that true power and control is about relinquishing it and growing from that, no matter where it takes us. This is a very challenging message for homilists to share with anyone, let alone young people who are navigating their vulnerability in their developmental journey of life.

The criminal on the cross next to Jesus faces his powerlessness head on, saying to those who would ridicule the Lord, “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... Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom” (Lk 23:40,42). His vulnerability shines forth in the midst of the storm on Calvary.

Young people are more vulnerable than we may see on the surface or than they are comfortable admitting. They may be masking something painful or embarrassing with confidence, deflection, or indifference. However, as Pope Francis noted, “We adults can often be tempted to list all the problems and failings of today’s young people... (but) anyone called to be a parent, pastor, or guide to young people must have the farsightedness to appreciate the little flame that continues to burn, the fragile reed that is shaken but not broken (cf. Is 42:3) ... Each young person’s heart should thus be considered ‘holy ground,’ a bearer of the seeds of divine life, before which we must ‘take off our shoes’ in order to draw near and enter more deeply into the Mystery” (CV 66, 67).

The homilist can invite the community to be patient with youth and young adults, recognizing that they may have vulnerabilities we cannot immediately see on the surface. Yet like Christ the King on the cross, we can offer them our support and renewed hope. Likewise, the homilist can encourage the young people of the community to look to Jesus who shares in their suffering and pain, as he did on the cross.

*NOTE: These homily and small group reflections can be a starting point for communities in unpacking the readings for a given liturgical cycle. They are not meant to be exhaustive or complete, but ideas for connecting the Word of God with the experience of youth and young adults and the Church's ministerial accompaniment of them. Further homily supports for the Global Celebration of Young People will be available each year through the USCCB website.*

## PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

As the Prayer of the Faithful (also known as the "Universal Prayer" or the "petitions") is a response of the People of God, it would be helpful to have those prayers given by one or several young people (youth and/or young adults), as well as those who mentor and accompany them.

In the weeks leading up to Christ the King Sunday (or the date of the community's choosing), it would also be fitting to include petitions that connect to young people, raising the consciousness of the assembly to consider the role and protagonism of youth and young adults in their midst (as well as those disaffiliated from the faith community).

### PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL FOR SUNDAYS LEADING UP TO THE SOLEMNITY OF CHRIST THE KING

*NOTE: These are examples and ideas for what can be included during those liturgies.*

**For the Church, as she prepares to celebrate young people on the Solemnity of Christ the King, that all people understand more deeply the love Christ has for the young, we pray to the Lord.**

**For all those participating in the global celebration of young people on Christ the King Sunday, that the Lord move their hearts to a closer relationship with him, we pray to the Lord.**

**For young people in the Church, that they may be welcomed as an integral part of the Body of Christ by all God's faithful, we pray to the Lord.**

**For youth and young adults searching for meaning, that they may discern God's unique role for them in building up his Kingdom, we pray to the Lord.**

**For young people on the margins of society, for those suffering in body and mind, and for those who are lost and alone, may they find compassion and accompaniment from the Church and her members, we pray to the Lord.**

**For youth and young adults who are distant from the Church, that the upcoming universal celebration of young people may be an opportunity for renewal and connection, we pray to the Lord.**

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL FOR THE SOLEMNITY  
OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, KING OF THE UNIVERSE

NOTE: *There should be no more than four or five petitions for the Universal Prayer during the Mass. Below are options from which to choose within the different categories of prayer (for the needs of the Church; for public authorities and the salvation of the whole world; for those burdened by any kind of difficulty; for the local community; for the faithful departed). One or two prayers can be chosen from each of those categories.*

**Priest/Presider:**

**Christ the King is seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven.  
Let us approach him in humility and confidence as God's sons and daughters  
to pray for the needs of the Church and the world.**

**Deacon/Reader(s):**

FOR THE NEEDS OF THE CHURCH

**For the Holy Father and all leaders of the Church, that they may genuinely accompany  
the faithful, especially youth and young adults, in service to Christ the King,  
we pray to the Lord.**

**For the baptized of all generations, that they may live out their priestly, prophetic,  
and kingly roles in bringing about the Kingdom of God, especially in the company  
of young people,  
we pray to the Lord.**

**For Catholics around the world today who, in solidarity with us, are celebrating  
youth and young adults, that we may continue to advocate and support young  
people in our communities,  
we pray to the Lord.**

**For the young people of the Church who will gather together at the next  
international World Youth Day in *(the next WYD host country)* in *(the next  
international WYD year)*, that this global encounter will be a moment of  
transformation and grace for all pilgrims and leaders who participate,  
we pray to the Lord.**

FOR PUBLIC AUTHORITIES AND THE SALVATION OF THE WHOLE WORLD

**For leaders of communities, especially the young, that, inspired by the Prince of  
Peace, they strive to defend the dignity of all human life and foster peace and  
harmony across cultures and peoples,  
we pray to the Lord.**

**For all those who are denied religious freedom around the world, in particular  
young people, that we may work together to bring about the kingdom envisioned by  
Christ, our eternal king,  
we pray to the Lord.**

**For youth and young adults of all nations, cultures, and races, that under the  
guidance of Christ, King of the Universe, they may aspire to become protagonists of  
transformation and peace,  
we pray to the Lord.**

For young people serving in public office, the military, law enforcement, public service, and all who are in any position of authority, that Christ the King may always guide their servant leadership,  
we pray to the Lord.

FOR THOSE BURDENED BY ANY KIND OF DIFFICULTY

For young people on the margins of society, for those suffering in body and mind, and for those who are lost and alone, that they may find the concrete support of a loving community of faith,  
we pray to the Lord.

For young people who have been hurt by or feel marginalized from religious institutions, that they may find peace and healing, in particular through the loving embrace of a Christian community,  
we pray to the Lord.

For young people who are struggling with job loss, economic uncertainty, or anxiety in their work, that they may find strength and direction along their vocational path,  
we pray to the Lord.

For young people who are sick and suffering from any health concerns and for those who are challenged by mental or physical disabilities, that they may experience the healing of Christ the King,  
we pray to the Lord.

FOR THE COMMUNITY

For all youth and young adults in this community, for the younger generations in our own families, and for those who remain distant from us, that they may all grow closer to Christ the King,  
we pray to the Lord.

For all those who accompany youth and young adults on their faith journey in the Church, that they may be strengthened and supported for the invaluable work they do in Christ's name,  
we pray to the Lord.

For youth and young adults who teach, witness, and share their faith and accompany their peers along the journey towards Christ the King, that they may be strengthened in their vocation,  
we pray to the Lord.

For young people who are serving our communities through their work and labor, that they may be guided in their vocational pathway in service to others and to the whole world,  
we pray to the Lord.

For young people who are students, those in apprenticeships and trade schools, and young men and women in formation, that their minds may always be open to wisdom and transformation,  
we pray to the Lord.

**For this community and for parishes, missions, campus ministries, organizations, and schools around the world, that we may continue to engage and accompany the young people we encounter,  
we pray to the Lord.**

#### FOR THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

**For all who have died, in a particular way those young people who died at an early age, that they may find rest in the arms of Christ the Lord in his heavenly Kingdom,  
we pray to the Lord.**

**For the faithful departed who are beloved by young people in our community, that their memory may be a guide and blessing for all generations that follow them,  
we pray to the Lord.**

**For all who have died in the light of Christ the King, especially those from our community and those close to the heart of our young people, that they may walk with the Lord for eternity,  
we pray to the Lord.**

#### **Priest/Presider:**

**Lord, our God, we bring to you our fervent prayers, those voiced and those in the silence of our hearts.**

**We join them to young Mary of Nazareth  
and all the prophets and loved ones gone before us. Hear the prayers of your people gathered**

**and grant them in your wisdom and mercy.**

**To Christ the King, robed in majesty and justice,  
be glory and power for ever and ever. R:/ Amen.**

Alternatively, or in addition to the above, "A Prayer for Youth and Young Adults" (found at the beginning of this guidebook) can be provided for the assembly (on prayer cards or included with the worship aid, etc.), which can be recited by all people right after the Prayer of the Faithful.

## SPECIAL BLESSING OPTIONS

Consider offering a blessing over young people present in the assembly, either as a conclusion to the Prayer of the Faithful (Universal Prayer) in lieu of the concluding prayer or as a closing blessing for the Mass. This may be done at the discretion of the pastor / presider, in light of the norms and customs of the local community. The following blessing prayers are provided here for your consideration; however, liturgical planners and celebrants may wish to use one of the options found within the *Book of Blessings* or from the *Catholic Household Blessings and Prayers*.

Prior to the blessing, celebrants can invite young people forward, or to invite them to stand up or step out into the aisle of their church, so that they can be recognized and prayed over by the assembly.

**Option 1:**

**God of infinite majesty,**

**We ask your blessing upon these young people.**

**May they come to know you and witness to your saving power.**

**Bless and keep them always, strengthen them for the journey ahead,  
challenge them to be faithful to your Word and to live lives of integrity,  
and grant them a prophetic spirit to transform the world by your love.**

**Help all of us, also, to accompany these young men and women,  
through the joys, struggles, and experiences of their everyday lives,  
and grant us the humility to learn from and be inspired by the young.**

**Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever.**

*R:/ Amen.*

**Option 2:**

**God of power and might,**

**We ask your blessing upon these young people.**

**May they continue to grow in wisdom, knowledge, and understanding.**

**Bless their endeavors and actions, that they may be a blessing to their peers.**

**Open their minds to your wisdom, open their hearts to your love, and  
open their hands to transform their world toward the Kingdom of God.**

**And for all of us, O Lord, grant a willing spirit to walk with them.**

**Fill us with the words to say as we teach and guide them, and  
give us the ears to hear as we listen and learn from them, too.**

**Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever.**

*R:/ Amen.*

**Option 3:**

**Good and gracious God, King of the universe,**

**we ask your blessing upon the young people gathered here,  
and for all youth and young adults beyond our community.**

**Bless and keep them,**

**so that they may know they are infinitely loved (cf. CV 112).**

**Pour out your great mercy upon them,**

**so that they may know they are saved (cf. CV 118).**

**Give them newfound hope,**

**so that they may know your presence at every moment (cf. CV 125).**

**Accompany us, Lord, young and old,**

**as we accompany one another on this "journey together" (CV 199).**

Fill us with humility to learn from each other,  
and enkindle in us a passion for truth, beauty, and goodness.  
Inspire us to go out to encounter you in these young people,  
“to accompany and encourage them, trusting a little more in the genius of the  
Holy Spirit, who acts as he wills” (CV 230).  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.  
R:/ Amen.

## OTHER LITURGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Consider these additional liturgical elements to further enhance the celebration of the Global Celebration of Young People on the Solemnity of Christ the King. Local communities may wish to establish a small committee or task group of young people (depending on the scope, this can include youth, college students, and/or young adults) who can plan and organize the liturgies on this weekend. This committee can also create a fitting liturgical environment, offer suggestions for music, and identify young people to serve in various liturgical roles (including ushers and greeters).

### LITURGICAL ENVIRONMENT

- Consider ways to emphasize Christ the King within the worship space (images, icons, banners, statues, etc.).
- Decorate the sanctuary area (banners, liturgical colors, greenery and flowers, symbols, etc.) in a way that reminds people of the special nature of this solemnity, draws people towards Christ, and connects the assembly with the Church’s ministry with young people.
- Display flags of the nations that represent the cultural communities and nationalities of the young people within that given community; this can also help remind people of the global nature of this celebration.
- Be mindful of the cultural diversity present among young people in your local area when considering liturgical environments.
- Use a sprinkling rite (*General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, no. 51; Appendix II of *The Roman Missal*) or incense (*General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, nos. 276-277) in the blessing prayer or ritual for the young people present in the assembly.

### SONG AND MUSIC

- Music is an opportunity to bring together young instrumentalists and vocalists from the community and highlight their gifts with various styles and lyrics, as well as bilingual (or multi-lingual) music, especially in culturally diverse environments.
- In a high school or college campus settings, work with the music department to assist with this unique celebration and encourage participation of young people engaged in the school’s musical ensembles, etc.
- When considering selections, reflect on songs that emphasize the Sunday readings and the Solemnity of Christ the King, as well as the Church’s focus on accompaniment, evangelization, pastoral care, and formation of young people.

- Look to Catholic publishers and companies that have specialized in liturgical or Christian music that is popular or well-known among youth and/or young adults.
- As this is the final Sunday of the liturgical year, consider music selections that are celebratory and inspiring.
- Be mindful of the cultural diversity among young people in the local area, and consider featuring a variety of music styles, forms, and languages present in Catholic musical expression today. In this same spirit, do not assume that all youth and young adults prefer one form of music or another.

## PROCESSIONS

- Young people serving as liturgical ministers (and those with visible roles during the Mass) may be part of the processional and recessional during the liturgy on the Global Celebration of Young People.
- In addition, local communities may wish to incorporate other youth or young adults in the processions.
- For the offertory procession, consider the diversity of young people present in the community to bring up the gifts to the altar.

## WITNESS OR TESTIMONY

- At a specified time, determined by the pastor and/or liturgical coordinator for the community (before, during, or after the Mass), a young person (or several young people) may make a brief witness or testimony. During the Mass, this reflection never replaces the homily but takes place during the announcements following the Prayer after Communion.
- This witness should be a well-spoken young person, comfortable speaking before crowds, with a compelling story or message to share. They should represent the diversity of youth and/or young adults in the community (this should certainly be taken into consideration if more than one individual speaks).
- The message conveyed should tie into the Solemnity of Christ the King, the Holy Father's annual message or theme for young people, or the Church's global focus on youth and young adults on this special day.
- Brevity is encouraged. Speakers should avoid overt promotion of any kind.
- The witness presentation should be written out and the text should be shared with the pastor or member of the parish staff beforehand.
- The tone should be positive and inspiring, compelling people to know more about young people, their cultures and situations, and the Church's pastoral ministry with them.
- An alternative (or in addition) to giving spoken witness or testimony could include handouts featuring the stories of young people or information about the Church's work with youth and/or young adults. However, in the spirit of ecological awareness, consider offering digital versions of these handouts/promotions.

## MYSTAGOGY

- Mystagogy is the integration of the sacramental life beyond the liturgical moment, deepening one's journey of discipleship and prayer. This life-giving circle is strengthened by reflection and contemplation. It is "discovering the new life we have received in the People of God through the Sacraments, and continually rediscovering

the beauty of renewing it.”<sup>2</sup>

- Pastoral leaders can connect with youth and/or young adults in the day or week following the liturgy to ask them questions such as
  - What was your favorite moment in the liturgy?
  - What, when, or where did you feel the presence of God in the liturgy?
  - How do these moments make you feel now?
  - What change can you make in your life with these realizations?
- There are no right or wrong responses to questions like these but having moments to reflect on the liturgy can help young people discover how worship can lead to an encounter with the living God.
- Additionally, consider ways to incorporate the lessons received on the Global Celebration of Young People throughout the rest of the year, especially in the weeks of Advent that will immediately follow.

## POST-LITURGY OPPORTUNITIES

After one or more of the Masses on the Global Celebration of Young People, there can be opportunities to gather and connect with one another. Consider how the invitational process (as well as the logistics of getting from one space to another) for these post-liturgy activities will take place in the local community.

### MEET AND GREET

- A “meet and greet” social can be held after Mass in an area accessible to the worship space.
- Young people and their families can specifically be invited to attend this gathering, or the “meet and greet” can be an opportunity for the entire assembly to connect with young people who are active in the Church or who are leaders within the faith community.
- Be mindful of signage, greeters/ushers, and clear directions for moving to the gathering location.
- Tables or displays can be set up in the vestibule or narthex of the worship space, highlighting the Church’s work with youth and/or young adults, or in the gathering location of the social event.
- Be mindful of accessibility for those with disabilities.

### FORMATION SESSIONS

- After Mass, the young people or the entire assembly can be invited to attend a short formation session, either about Christ the King, the annual message or theme from the Holy Father, or around issues and topics important to young people and the local

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<sup>2</sup> Francis, “To Participants at the Plenary Assembly of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments,” 14 Feb 2019. [http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2019/february/documents/papa-francesco\\_20190214\\_cong-culto-divino.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2019/february/documents/papa-francesco_20190214_cong-culto-divino.html).

community – or (if aimed at all people) about youth and/or young adults and the Church’s pastoral ministry with them.

- These formation sessions can include food and drink, as well as social and spiritual components.
- Due to the busy nature of people’s lives, consider the amount of time these sessions might take.
- Hold these formation activities in a location proximate to the worship space (making it convenient to move from Mass to these programs), being mindful of accessibility for those with disabilities.

## SERVICE ACTIVITIES

- After Mass, gather young people together for a special service/justice activity within the local community.
- Provide transportation or help participants navigate to the location of these activities, being mindful of accessibility issues (in transportation or at the event site) for those with disabilities.
- The service/justice work should be relevant to the young people in the community and help them see the integration of the Gospel with the work they are undertaking.
- These service activities can include food, drink, and social and spiritual components.
- Due to the busy nature of people’s lives, consider the amount of time these activities might take.
- Consider having a time for the participants to reflect upon their experiences of service and justice, through prayer and group dialogue (incorporating the teaching of the Church from documents such as *Fratelli Tutti*, *Laudato Si*, and *Christus Vivit*).

## COMMUNICATIONS AND GRATITUDE

- Keep in touch with young people who were present for the Global Celebration of Young People through emails, texts, WhatsApp, social media, or written letters, etc.
- Post pictures and testimony from the liturgy in parish communications (website, emails, social media, etc.).
- Send notes of gratitude to the young people who participated, as well as those who collaborated and supported the activities (including the pastor, parish council, leadership teams, among others).
- Look for ways to continue the relationship with young people beyond Christ the King Sunday, using Advent and Christmas (immediately following the celebration) as ways to engage and deepen the connection.

**Please consult the appendix for a helpful tool in planning the liturgical celebration of young people, and ensuring all roles are accounted for, within your community on the Solemnity of Christ the King.**