

# Celebrating Christ The King – Celebrating Youth in the local Church



## Liturgical Notes and Suggestions

*Pope Francis has released his message for the 36th World Youth Day which will be held on 21 November (Solemnity of Christ the King) at the local level on the theme: “Stand up. I appoint you as a witness of what you have seen.” (cf. Acts 26:16)<sup>1</sup>*

### **Introduction**

The Feast of Christ the King has been designated as the day the universal Church will celebrate God’s gift of youth and young adult. It is a day set aside to remind the whole Church the important task of accompanying young people on their journey through life.

It is proposed that parishes, communities of faith and groups of young people set a side time to renew and recommit their apostolate to youth

There are many people who accompany youth and young adults. The new *Pastoral Guidelines for the Celebration of World Youth Day in the Particular Churches*<sup>2</sup> aim to enable and empower the celebration of young people in each local Church.

‘Particular gratitude is also due for the generous commitment of countless lay persons, priests and bishops who daily devote themselves with integrity and dedication to the service of the young.’  
*Christus Vivit 99*

Pope Francis has invited the whole Church to commemorate, celebrate young people annually on Christ the King.

### **Role of Parishes & Communities of Faith**

Many parishes seek to find ways of involving and inviting young people to be part of the community. Parish Pastoral Councils and Liturgy Groups might consider using the Feast of Christ the King to invite and involve young people during the Sunday Masses.

- Establish a Parish Working Group to plan a liturgy.
- Involve existing young people who attend your parish
- Invite young people to Read, Lead Music and take active roles
- Invite a young person to give a testimony of faith

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/youth.index.html>

<sup>2</sup> Published by the Dicastery of Laity, Family and Life, May 2021

- Have a closing blessing especially for young people.

### ***Preparation and Involvement***

#### **Entrance Greeting – Welcome and Introductory Remarks**

Typically, celebrants provide a welcome greeting that connects to the day, making a connection with the readings of the day. IN addition celebrants might reference the scripture passage that is the focus of Pope Francis' message to young people.

The congregation could be invited to notice the young people in Church (who hopefully are in attendance!)

The Vatican Dicastery for Family, Laity and Life have provided some words that might be a suitable greeting,

'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)

The key note, is the tone and pastoral manner and welcome to young people.

'We need to make all our institutions better equipped to be more welcoming of young people.'  
*Christus Vivit 216.*

'The language that young people understand is spoken by those who radiate life, by those who are there for them and with them.'  
*Christus Vivit 211*

#### **Proclaiming the Word of God**

The Word of God is essential to the liturgy. Parishes can identify and help to train young people to take on the role of proclaiming the word. 'Let us draw upon some of the richness of the sacred Scriptures since they often speak of young people and of how the Lord draws near to encounter them.'  
*Christus Vivit 5.*

#### **Christ the King 2021 - Readings**

- Daniel 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.)
- Rev 1:5-8 ('I am the Alpha and the Omega... the one who is and who was and who is come, the almighty.')
- John 18:33-37 (Pilate said to Jesus, 'Are you the King of the Jews?')

## **Prayers of the Faithful**

A suggestion is for young people to read the Prayers of the Faithful. If there are parish youth groups, maybe they could compose some of the prayers.

- 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 those young people celebrating Christ the King today around the world, we pray 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 celebration of Christ the King may be an opportunity for renewal and reconnection,
  - We Pray to the Lord

## **Special Blessing of Young People**

*Consideration offering a blessing of young people either to those present at mass. It can take place just after the conclusion of the Prayer of the Faithful or as a closing blessing for the Mass.*

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.

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 their joys, struggles, and experiences of their everyday lives.

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. Amen.

### ***Other Liturgical Considerations***

- Invite and young people in the preparations, maybe with some members of the Parish Pastoral Council
- Be creative – decorate the Sanctuary to emphasis the significance of the Solemnity. (Banners, liturgical colours, symbols or digital screens)
- Flags – if your parish is multi-cultural – celebrate the diversity with flags, music and creativity.
- Use a sprinkling rite (The Roman Missal) and incense in the blessing prayer for young people.

### ***Music***

- Invite young people to bring their voices, instruments and various styles to animate the liturgy.
- The tone/style of the music can emphasise and reflect on the readings of the Solemnity of Christ the King. Also they can reflect the themes of evangelisation, joy, pastoral care, formation and accompaniment.
- The Emmanuel Schools Liturgical Music Programme has many options to assist this ([www.dublindiocese.ie](http://www.dublindiocese.ie))

### ***Procession***

- Young People serving as liturgical ministers and various roles can be part of the procession and recession.
- For the offertory procession invite young people to take part and maybe even dress the altar

### ***Witness/Testimony***

Consider inviting a young people to make a brief testimony about their faith. This can take place a time deemed suitable by the presider (usually after the prayer after communion).

It should be led by a young person, prepared and able to talk about their faith. If they can refer to the Solemnity of Christ the King and or refer to a recent faith based experience that works well.

After Mass –

- Maybe prepare and host a ‘meet and greet’ with those young people present.
- Have some hospitality for an opportunity for all those gathered to meet
- Invite young people to keep in touch with upcoming opportunities to get involved, to serve, to volunteer and to lead.