

Chaplain's Bulletin November 23, 2025



Dear Folks,

This is the feast of Christ the King, the celebration of Jesus' great victory over evil, over sin and death, and now He reigns supreme forever. Alleluia! And yet, our Gospel is of Jesus on the cross. He is being ridiculed, and He makes no reply. He cannot move His hands or His feet. He has to fight to breathe. This is not what humans think when we think about a great king in his triumphant moment. This cuts to the heart of the Christian paradox that the world cannot understand. Jesus' mighty power is expressed most powerfully not in His amazing miracles or brilliant teaching, but His faithful suffering and death.

St. Paul understood this, saying "If I must boast, I will boast of the things that exhibit my weakness (2 Corinthians 11:30; see 11:16-30)" and "Hence, I will boast most gladly of my weaknesses, in order that the power of Christ may dwell within me. For this reason, I rejoice when I endure weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and distress for the sake of Christ. For it is when I am weak that I am strong (2 Corinthians 12:9b-10; see 7-10)."

Some resist admitting a mistake or failing for fear it will make them look weak, but whom do we trust more: someone who admits when they fail or someone who always, always finds a reason why it is not their fault and not their failing?

Not only have I had to deal with the fact at my age that my biceps aren't what they used to be, but I have had some particularly powerful lessons in weakness lately, with more on the way. I have found that times of weakness can be great times of love, and God values love more than biceps.

We look at all the evil in the world, and it is overwhelming. We feel helpless. I find that is often when God does His best work.

Christians are never helpless. Even if we can only do a teeny, tiny bit, if we do that bit with everything we have, that is huge in God's eyes (see the story of the widow's mite (Mark 12:41-44 and Luke 21:1-4). Even if we are completely immobile, we can pray, though this will put our faith in the power of prayer to the test. I find that God is quite willing to let our faith be stretched. If our minds go so that we cannot form a coherent prayer, God can still touch us on a deep level, as Psalm 8 tells us, "From the mouths of children and babes you fashioned praise to foil your enemy, to silence the foe and the rebel."

The basic message of the book of Revelation, as well as Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21, is that the world may fall apart and go horribly wrong, but Jesus is victorious, and if we remain faithful to Him, we will share in the victory (for example Matthew 24:13).

Bottom line: The more the world goes wrong, the more tightly we need to cling to Jesus. If we stay faithful to Him and do not give up, we can contribute to making things better, but He has the victory. He reigns supreme.

Blessings,
Fr Jim