

## The Feast of Christ the King

### King of the Jews

#### INTRODUCTION

Today is the last Sunday of the Church's year, when we celebrate the Feast of Christ the King. Jesus had been sentenced to die on the cross and the soldiers and crowds who had gathered to watch his suffering jeered and made fun of the 'King of the Jews'.

#### SIGN OF THE CROSS

#### LIGHT THE CANDLES

Sing together: *See the Light.*

#### SORRY

Jesus came to show us how to be loving and forgiving. Even as he was being nailed to the cross he prayed to his heavenly Father, 'Forgive them because they do not understand what they are doing'. Together we ask Jesus to forgive us and to make *us* more forgiving towards others as we listen to the words of this prayer:

Teach us your ways, Lord,  
and make them known to all your people.  
Show us how to walk in your truth,  
because you are our saviour  
and we can always trust  
in your love and forgiveness.

#### GLORIA

#### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

To welcome today's Gospel sing this Acclamation (to the tune of *Hickory, Dickory, Dock.*)

Christ is the king of the world,  
One day he will come back  
And we will see his full glory,  
Christ is the king of the world.

#### GOSPEL (cf Luke 23:35-43)

The soldiers nailed Jesus to the cross and above him hung a sign which said: 'This is the King of the Jews.'

A crowd had gathered to watch and they laughed and made fun of him saying, 'If you are so great, save yourself now!'

At the same time two thieves were crucified with Jesus, one on either side. One of the thieves jeered, 'Call yourself a king! If you had any power you could save yourself, and us as well!'

But the other thief said, 'Leave him alone. We deserve to be punished but he has done nothing wrong.'

Then he said to Jesus, 'Lord, do not forget me

in your kingdom,' and Jesus answered, 'Today we will be together in Heaven.'

#### DISCUSSION

The soldiers and the crowd teased and made fun of Jesus. What did the sign which hung above him say? – 'This is the King of the Jews'. Earlier, some of the soldiers had made a 'crown' from thorny brambles, and had wrapped a red cloak around him to make fun of him.

How would you describe a King to someone? – They often live in a palace; they have servants to take care of all their needs; on grand occasions they wear a crown; they own jewels and treasures and are very wealthy; they rule over their kingdom, and their people do as they command.

Was Jesus a typical king? – People laughed at Jesus when he called himself a king. He had no wealth, no fine palaces or servants; he ruled over no country and he had no army to save him. Jesus had told them, 'My kingdom is not of this world,' but people did not understand. His kingdom is not a country or place, it is the sharing of God's love with each of us. Anyone who puts their love for God and their neighbour before anything else is a part of the kingdom. The kingdom of God grows in people who love Jesus, and as they grow in love, kindness and forgiveness so God's kingdom grows too.

Who was crucified on either side of Jesus?

What did Jesus promise the good thief? – That he would not forget his faith and trust, and that he would be welcomed into the kingdom of Heaven.

#### ACTIVITY

Cut out the three crosses and a sun with rays, and ask the children to colour them. Ask some of the children to colour the banner background before gluing the crosses and sun in position. Add the title, 'Christ is our king.'

#### CREED

#### CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus,  
you come to share the Good News  
of God's Kingdom  
with the whole world.  
May your love reign  
in our hearts always.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord.