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WE SERVE CHRIST OUR KING WITH OUR LIVES

He was known as the "Flying Scotsman." And he was the projected winner of the men's 100 meters race at the 1924 Summer Olympics. But when Eric Liddell discovered that the trial runs were scheduled for a Sunday morning, he bowed out of the race. Even the Prince of Wales could not persuade him to honor his country by running on the Sabbath. "God my King is greater than the kings of England, Wales and Scotland. To honor God is more important than to honor the king of England," Liddell insisted.

Because he was a missionary as well as a talented athlete, Eric Liddell had a keen awareness of God's primary importance in our lives. He observed that "God makes kings, and the rules by which they govern. And those rules say that the Sabbath is His. And I for one intend to keep it that way." As we celebrate the feast of Christ the King, we ask ourselves: How does the way I live reveal that the Son of God rules me? How might others guess that Christ is my King?

Christ reigns over us by the power of truth and the rule of love. You and I would not be here today to celebrate the Eucharist if Jesus were not the ruler of our lives. We recognize the truth of His presence among us. We know him in the breaking of the bread, in the word of God, and in the fellowship of those around us. While worldly leaders may impose harsh or unjust laws, Christ rules through love alone. When Eric Liddell ran in his second-best event, he ran with a paper crumpled in his hand. It read, "Those who honor me I will honor" (1 Sm 2:30). And he set a new world's record. If we remain faithful to Christ, we will win a much more important race and live in his eternal kingdom.

Christ expects us to follow him in testifying to the truth. Pontius Pilate might have tried harder to avoid imposing the death sentence if Jesus had not made it known that he was a king whose rule far surpassed anything the Roman procurator had imagined. But Jesus would not deny the truth of his identity. The truth of our identity as Christians is that we are members of "a royal priesthood," a people who belong to God (1 Pt 1:9). We are called to testify to the truth about unjust systems and worldly powers that fail to honor the human dignity of every person. Eric Liddell served as a missionary in China because he was driven to share the joy of honoring God. We evangelize others every time we decide that honoring God is more important than pleasing ourselves.

Christ has made us a kingdom of priests to serve our God. By his life of self-giving and his death of self-sacrifice, Jesus reveals what it means to be a true priest and a true son or daughter of the Most High God. We show that we belong to royalty when we, like Christ the King, lift up the poor, welcome the sinner, forgive an enemy, confront injustice, comfort the sick, guide the children, respect the aged, and praise our God with all that we are. Eric Liddell speaks the most memorable line in the movie *Chariots of Fire*. He assures his sister, "When I run, I feel God's pleasure." We feel that same pleasure when we fulfill the purpose for which God made us.

As another church year runs its course, we rededicate ourselves to Christ the King whose truth is our rule of life. With grateful hearts, we approach the altar to become one with our self-giving Lord.



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The Lord is king; he is robed in majesty....Psalm 93