



“In the Centre of Immensities”

**The Solemnity of Our Lord, Jesus Christ, King of the Universe
23 November 2025**

Reflection - Mgr Daniel McHugh

“Truly I say to you, today, you will be with me in paradise.” (Luke 23:43)

On Sunday last, 16 November, I was drawn to listening to Sunday Worship after the 8 o'clock morning news on Radio 4. The title was “Awe and Wonder at Jodrell Bank Observatory”. Sunday Worship was coming from this famous scientific centre to mark 80 years of its foundation and the extraordinary work of Sir Bernard Lovell, the first Director there. The programme explored the relationship of Science and Faith. The awe that the Universe evokes and leads many of us to see the Hand of God at work; others say there is no creator, it is a meaningless question. For Sir Bernard Lovell there was no conflict between his scientific research and his Christian Faith. The Big Bang Theory and Evolution do not detract from our Faith but rather enrich it: the opening hymn “For the beauty of the earth” was a beautiful rendering in the prayer of our thanksgiving for God’s awesome work. The book “In the Centre of Immensities” by Lovell “ranges over the whole history of man’s attempt to understand the lights which appear in the sky above us.” (cf Goodreads.com). A key person who explored the relationship of Science and Faith was St Albert the Great, and I had remembered him at Mass on the day before, 15 November, his Feast Day. The Catholic Church

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has a rich history of scientists and “natural philosophers” who studied God’s creation systemically as a way to come to better know its Creator. I first came to hear of St Albert and Great when I was a student of Philosophy in Rome, and he was one of the most important and influential in this field, way back in the 1200s. Albert, who was the teacher of the great Theologian Thomas Aquinas “had an almost encyclopaedic knowledge of a range of physical sciences, from physics, to biology to astronomy (cf *Aleteia*). We see in him a beautiful blend of faith and reason, a mind that sought to find the causes of things... to learn about these causes was to come to learn something of the mind of God.

The Solemnity of Christ the King of the Universe leads us to reflect on the role of Our Lord in Creation. St Paul says in the first chapter of the letter to the Colossians, read on the Solemnity, “by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities - all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.” In “Seeds for the Soul” we read: “That is what we celebrate today on the Feast of Christ the King. The Church celebrates the Feast on the last Sunday of the Liturgical Calendar as a reminder of who is the centre of the universe – Christ.” (Seed for the Soul, Brendan McGuire, p.136).

The Solemnity was established by Pope Pius XI at the beginning of the 1900s to remind all of humanity of the importance of Christ. With the demise throughout Europe of kings and queens as we knew them and the rise of a new way to govern, Pope Pius felt that there was a danger of losing the significance of the Christ event. So he established the Feast as a reminder of the centrality of Christ to the universe. When we turn to the Gospel for the Solemnity we are confronted with the image of Jesus dying on the Cross, and the words he spoke to the criminal who recognised Him as the Messiah: “Truly I say to you, today you will

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be with me in paradise.” In Jesus, through his Death and Resurrection, we have a new Creation, too, a new kingdom built on love. St Paul continues in Colossians: “And he is the head of the body, the Church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be pre-eminent... making peace by the blood of the cross.”

Through the wonderful witness of Pope Francis, now reinforced by Pope Leo, we have been reminded of the beauty of the created world and that we are called to love, respect and care for it. They continue in their teaching and witness, to call us to build up the new creation brought to us in Christ the Risen King.

The concluding prayer for the Mass this Sunday reads:

“Having received the food of immortality,
we ask, O Lord,
that, glorying in obedience
to the commands of Christ, the King of the universe,
we may live with Him eternally in His heavenly Kingdom,
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever”

Amen.

With the eyes of faith we too recognize that Jesus, the Crucified one, is indeed King and Saviour of all.

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