

The Triumph of Christ through the Eucharist

Christus vincit, regnat, imperat; ad omni malo plebem suam defendat.

Christ conquers, he reigns, He commands. May He defend his people from all evil.

Pope Sixtus V had these words engraved on the obelisk which stands in the center of St. Peter's Square at Rome. These magnificent words are in the present tense, and not in the past, o indicate that Christ's triumph is always actual, and that it is brought about in the Eucharist and by the Eucharist.

Christus vincit. Christ conquers

Our Lord has fought; He has won control of the field of battle, on which He planted His flag and pitched His tent: the Sacred Host and the Eucharistic tabernacle. He conquered the Jew and his temple, and He has a tabernacle on Calvary where all the nations come to adore Him beneath the sacramental species. He conquered paganism and has chosen Rome, the city of Caesars for His capital.

He conquered the false wisdom of the sages; the divine Eucharist rose on the world and shed its rays over the whole earth, darkness withdrew like the shades of night at the coming of day. The idols have been knocked down and the sacrifices abolished. The Eucharistic Jesus is a conqueror who never halts but ever marches onward; He wants to subject the universe to His gentle way. Every time He takes possession of a coin try, He pitches His Eucharistic royal tent therein. The erection of a tabernacle is His official occupation of a country. In our own day He still goes out to uncivilized nations; and wherever the Eucharist is brought, the people are converted to Christianity. That is the secret of the triumph of our Catholic missionaries and of the failure of Protestant preachers. For them, man is battling alone; for us, Jesus is battling and He is sure to triumph.

Christus regnat. Christ reigns

Jesus does not rule over earthly territories, but over souls, and He does so through the Eucharist. A king must rule through his laws and through the love of his subjects for him. The Eucharist is the law of the Christian: a law of charity and of love, which was promulgated in the Cenacle in the admirable discourse after the Supper: "This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. If you love Me, keep My commandments."

This law is revealed in Communion; the eyes of the Christian are opened in Holy Communion as were those of the disciples of Emmaus, and he understands the fullness of the law. The "breaking of the bread" is what made the first Christians so brave in the face of persecution and so faithful in practicing the law of Jesus Christ.

Christ's law is one, holy, universal, and eternal. It will never change or be impaired in any way; Jesus Christ Himself, its divine Author, is defending it. He engraves it on our hearts through His love; the Legislator Himself promulgates His divine law to each of our souls. His is a law of love, How many kings rule by love? Jesus is about the only one whose yoke is not imposed by force; His rule is gentleness itself. His true subjects are devoted to Him in life and death; they would rather die than be disloyal to Him.

Christus imperat. Christ commands

No king has command over the whole universe; one earthly king has another equal to him in power. But God the Father has said to Jesus Christ: "I will give Thee all the nations for Thy inheritance." And Our Lord told His lieutenants when He sent them throughout the world: "All power is given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go and teach ye all nations, teaching them to keep all I have commanded you."

He issued His commands from the Cenacle. The Eucharistic tabernacle, which is the prolongation or replica of the Cenacle, is the headquarters of the King of kings. All those who fight the good fight receive their orders from there. In the presence of the Eucharistic Jesus all men are subjects, all much obey, from the pope, the Vicar of Christ, down to the least of the faithful.

Christus ad omni malo plebem suam defendat. May Christ defend his people from all evil

The Eucharist is the divine lightning rod that wards off the thunderbolts of divine justice. As a tender and devoted mother presses her child to her bosom, puts her arms around it, and shields it with her body to save it from the wrath of an angry father, so Jesus multiplies His presence everywhere, covers the world and envelopes with His merciful presence. Divine Justice does not know then where to strike; it dares not.

And what a protection against the devil! The blood of Jesus which purples our lips makes us a terror to Satan; we are sprinkled with the blood of the true Lamb, and the exterminating angel will not enter. The Eucharist protects the sinner until time for repentance is given him. Ah! Were it not for the Eucharist, for this perpetual Calvary, how often would not the wrath of God have come down upon us! And how unhappy the nations that no longer possess the Eucharist! What darkness! What a confusion in the minds! What a chill in the hearts! Satan alone rules supreme, and with him all the evil passions. As for us, the Eucharist delivers us from all evil.

***Christus vincit, Christus regnat, Christus imperat;
ad omni malo plebem suam defendat!***

—St Peter Julian Eymard