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November 26, 2017
Christ the King Sunday
ILC, Wichita, KS
Rev. 1:8; "I am the Alpha and the Omega"

Grace, mercy and peace be unto you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

My good friends in Christ.

Today is a special holy day in the life of the Christian Church. For today is Christ the King Sunday.

Every once in a while... when we celebrate a holy day in the life of the Christian Church... one of our members will come up to me after church and ask... "How did this day happen to become a holy day?"

Well... I am glad that you asked me that question.

Today is Christ the King Sunday... a holy day... a day when the historic Christian Church has invited us to focus our entire worship service around this thought:

Christ is our King.

The leaders of the Christian Church throughout the centuries decided to establish this day as a holy day... because we are at the end of a Christian Church calendar year. In the Christian Church today is like ... New Year's Eve.

So... centuries ago the leaders of the Christian Church decided that they wanted to end the Church Year on a celebratory note... just like we do New Year's Eve. And when they thought and prayed about what holy occasion could make this day a celebration day for the Christian.... They decided to name this day: **Christ the King Sunday!**

Christ is our King... that is truly a day of celebration.

To focus our thoughts on this celebration... I would like to invite you to turn to the back cover of the worship bulletin. There... in the Epistle lesson... from the Revelation given to St. John...the 1st chapter... I would like to ask you to look at verse 8. I would like to invite you to join with me as together we read verse 8. It is the first full paragraph of the Right hand column

"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

St. John in this Beautiful Vision that God gave to Him.... Was gifted to see Jesus. And Jesus said... *I am the Alpha and the Omega.*

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Those words alpha and omega are used by Christ... as special words.

They are Greek words.

They are actually the names of letters of the alphabet in Greek.

Alpha.... is the first letter of the Greek alphabet

Omega.... is the last letter of the Greek alphabet.

Christ is here saying... that He is the first and the last... the beginning and the end.

To help us think on this thought... another way... I have brought along with me a Bible.

I. Let's turn to the very first book in the Bible. The very first book of the Bible is the Book of Genesis. Most of us are familiar with the initial part of the Book of Genesis, because it tells us all about the Creation of the World. In Genesis 1:26 we hear God say: "Let us.... (notice the word us)... make man in our image." In these words God tells us the fact that He is the Creator of our world and everything in our world. And when it came to making the very most special part of His creation... human beings... you and me... God said, "Let us make man in our own image."

In these words God is telling us that he is a Triune God. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit all participated in the creation of the world... and when we were created ... we were created in His image, in His likeness.

So... this tells us that physically, Jesus is with us when we are created. Jesus is the alpha... he is our very beginning... physically.

Jesus is our Alpha... Jesus is our beginning.

II. St. John in his revelation or vision of heaven... also hears Christ say: "*J am the Omega.*"

Remember that is the word for the.... last letter in the Greek alphabet.

Jesus is also our ending point.

In John chapter 14 Jesus is talking to His disciples on what we refer to Maundy Thursday. Jesus has told His disciples that He is going to have to suffer and die to redeem us from our sins. Jesus then goes on to tell His disciples that He will rise again from the dead and ascend into heaven. Needless to say... our Lord's disciples were not really able to fully comprehend this... and they were very nervous at the thought that Jesus would ascend into heaven and be gone from them.

Jesus tried to calm their fears by saying in John 14 verse 3: *And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also*

As Christians... we have these beautiful words from our Lord Himself telling us that when our lives on this earth are over... that this is not the end for us.... This is the beginnings of our eternal life with God in heaven.

Jesus is the Omega.

Jesus is the End.

Jesus is our beginning, Jesus is our end. Jesus is our Alpha and He is our Omega.

III. But that doesn't mean that we are just to sit around as baptized Children of God... waiting for Jesus to come again.

Jesus has given us a job.

In the church... we can that job... the Great Commission. Jesus has told us in Matthew 28, verses 19 and 20: *Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in^[a] the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

We are to be about making disciples.

- Each Sunday we come to church to hear that our sins are forgiven,
- we come to the blessed sacrament of Holy Communion to receive the true body and the true blood of Jesus Christ giving us the forgiveness of our sins,
- and we are reminded... that we are God's child.

... As God's child we are to be about sharing His message of salvation through Jesus Christ with our family, with our friends, with those that we work with, with those that we go to school with.

We share this Gospel message...

- through the way in which we live out our lives,
- by the way in which we show that we care for others,
- by inviting others to church, by praying for them.

I shared with you last Sunday... that I feel you do a very good job in sharing Christ with others by the way in which you live your life.

And now... as we get ready for Advent and Christmas... do you have a good friend? Invite them to church with you. Even if they have a church home... invite them to attend church with you... for sitting in church together as friends... is a great gift.

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This Christ the King Sunday... we give thanks to our God... for He is our beginning and He is our ending... and now while we are in the middle... we are to be about giving Him honor... and sharing Him with others. Amen.

Now may the peace of God which surpasses all understanding keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Amen.