



THE ARCHANGEL

Church of St Michael Archangel • Harts Lane • Burghclere • RG20 9JW • stmichaels@fsspx.uk

No. 102

October 2026

WHO IS OUR KING?

Dear Faithful,

In the month of October, we have the Feast of Christ the King, which was instituted by His Holiness Pope Pius XI in his encyclical *Quas Primas*. Holy Mother Church now calls us to pause amidst the tumult of life and reflect upon a fundamental question that governs our entire earthly existence: Who truly reigns as king over our lives?

When we look out at the modern world, we witness a society that has thoroughly dethroned Our Lord in every sense. Pope St Pius X, writing at the start of the twentieth century in his encyclical *E Supremi Apostolatus*, lamented a human race suffering from a terrible and corrosive “malady”: apostasy from God and the prideful effort to substitute man in His place. Today, that apostasy has reached its logical and devastating conclusion. The prince of this world — the devil — holds sway over our public institutions, civil laws, popular entertainment, and our public squares.

Everywhere we look, we see the aggressive secularisation of human life. We see laws passed that directly defy the Natural Law, the systematic destruction of the Christian family, and the elevation of vice over virtue. As Catholics, our instinct is rightly one of outrage and opposition. We recognise this illusion of human autonomy for what it truly is: a rebellion against the Almighty. We look at this fallen world, governed by the enemy, and we vehemently disagree with its maxims, its morals, and its godless direction. We know through our catechism that Satan’s kingdom promises liberty but delivers only slavery and ruin.

Yet, it is not enough for us merely to sit in judgment and condemn the godlessness of the world around us. We must sit down and take a good look at ourselves. We know, with full certainty, that Jesus Christ ought to be the supreme Master of our minds, our wills, and our hearts. However, we kneel before His altar, recite our Rosaries, and solemnly profess our allegiance to Him. Yet, how often are we torn away from Him in the quiet battles of our daily lives?

How easily are we dragged down by our corrupt inclinations, undisciplined desires, our repeated mistakes, and ingrained bad habits! When we surrender to our will, indulge in lukewarmness, or prioritise our

personal comfort and our own will above God’s commandments, we commit a subtle but real treason. In those moments, we dethrone the Good Lord from the sanctuary of our souls and crown our good selves as king. We attempt the impossible task of serving two masters: claiming to belong to Christ while living according to the self-centred spirit of the world, which we pretend to reject.

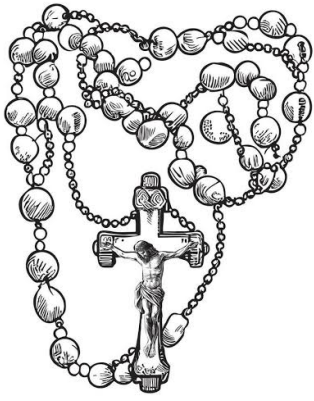
We must realise, however, that Our Lord’s sovereignty does not depend upon our consent, nor does it hinge upon the decrees of earthly rulers. As Pope Pius XI taught in *Quas Primas*, Christ possesses absolute, universal power over all creation — a sovereignty founded upon His very divine nature as Creator and upon His role as Redeemer of mankind.

He is independently, inherently, and eternally the King of all kings, the Lord of all nations, and the ultimate Sovereign of every human soul. He reigns whether men acknowledge His crown or trample it into the ground. His Kingship is an objective, unalterable reality that no secular parliament, no human philosophy, and no cultural tide can ever diminish. Our duty as His creatures is not to bestow authority upon Him, but to submit our intellects to His truth, our wills to His law, and our entire lives to Him.

On paper, we readily affirm these truths and in theory, we joyfully proclaim Him our King. But in daily practice, how often do we fail through our weakness and compromise? If we genuinely desire to combat the darkness of our age and overcome our own frailty, we must actively enthrone Our Lord in every corner of our hearts and minds. We must surrender our pride, mortify our self-will through penance, and make His divine teaching the absolute rule of our existence.

This, and this alone, is how we fulfil the sacred motto left to us by Pope St Pius X: *Instaurare omnia in Christo* — to restore all things in Christ. Let us begin this restoration today, in our homes, within our families, and in the depths of our own souls, by yielding total, loving submission to Christ the King.

Fr Dominic O’Hart, Prior



Beads and Baby-talk

There are few more joyful or elating moments in the life of a parent than when their child utters its first “word.” Though the term is somewhat an exaggeration, those first syllables “Mama” or “Dada” are more precious to the child’s parents than the most literate and complex essay ever could or will be. These short bursts of sound hold a message, an announcement, poignant for the very reason that it is simple.

Examine the scene: Long months pass swiftly by with the addition of a new family member. Mother and father devote sleepless nights and tireless care and attention to this creature made in their image and likeness. As days transform into weeks and weeks become months, the newborn learns from his surroundings, taking everything in with an intent and piercing gaze that only infants possess. He discovers countless new ideas and realities daily. His body grows and his mind tries to keep pace. Yet, for all this time, he is frustrated, hindered from exercising one of his most fundamental powers, namely, speech.

Now, why is this interesting? Well, compare the situation of an infant struggling to communicate with that of a soul trying to pray. In both cases the subject is a child; on one hand, a child according to age, and on the other, a child of God incapable of speaking the divine language or at least lacking the ability to speak to God with ease.

Now, what is prayer if not a use of God’s language? Prayer, and particularly prayers such as the Rosary which are exercises in repetition and rote, is divine baby-talk. As children of God, even being called heirs of heaven, souls lack the ability to converse with God on an equal level, so they must resort to something akin to the “Mama” and “Dada” of an infant. They are forced to repeat the same words over and over again because they simply don’t know how to say anything else!

Even so, these few words, inconsequential in themselves, have a real value in the eyes of those to whom they are addressed. Look at the joy and pride in parents when they hear such simple syllables addressed to themselves. Some would even claim that their elated reaction is deeply incongruous with the feat the child is actually performing. “It’s not a big deal. He pronounced two syllables and, honestly, not very clearly at all.” Others, perhaps more penetrating, would argue that this is the most important moment of the life of both a parent and child up to that point, considering the fact that he begins to use his God-given, natural ability to communicate the thoughts in his mind by means of sound.

Whatever the case may be, prayer is no different. Souls cry, “Abba, Father,” and Almighty God is pleased in a way that is factually disproportionate to the mathematical reality of these bare sounds. Why? Because He is a Father. He loves His children. He loves to hear them speak to Him, call Him by name, even if it is only blabbering attempts unworthy of the youngest infant. Nothing, in fact, pleases Him more! Recall the moment in the Gospel when the apostles asked Our Lord to teach them to pray. He did not instruct them in the rubrics of perfect meditation. He said, “When you pray, pray thus: ‘Our Father.’”

So, why is prayer, and particularly the Rosary, so difficult for souls? The Rosary is certainly not a complex prayer in itself. It is practically the same invocation repeated time and time again, *ad nauseam*. Any Catholic can pray a Hail Mary backward and forward. The Our Father is one of those prayers that we learn off in our earliest years, imitating the words of our mother. The Glory be is no different. So, why do most people consider the Rosary to be a difficult prayer even though on face value it is so simple?

There are many possible answers to this question. Apart from the obvious ones such as laziness or constant distractions, a few deeper reasons come to mind upon further consideration. The first challenge might be called one of mental gymnastics.

As many know well, the Rosary is meant to be a prayer of two kinds, both vocal and mental. The one who prays a Rosary is supposed to contemplate the scenes of the lives of Our Lord and Lady. However, he is simultaneously praying aloud the Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory be. So, this devout soul finds it extremely difficult to

focus both on the Hail Mary and on the pertinent mystery at the same time and, as a consequence, may tend to think that he is unable to pray the Rosary well.

This notion is rather laughable, in fact. Human beings have a mind which is physically unable to focus on two things at once. That is how God created the intellect of a rational animal. Try sometime to focus equally on two things at once and this will be painfully evident. So, what is the solution?

The Rosary is a prayer meant for all souls: the advanced, beginners; the learned, the devout but illiterate; sinners as well as the just. No one is excluded or precluded from being able to pray Our Lady's Chaplet. Young and old may pray it just as well as one another.

This is why there are two "ways" to pray a Rosary: One focused more on contemplation, thus allowing the lips to repeat by rote the child-like invocation to our Blessed Mother without much or any attention; the other, particularly attentive to the words that are spoken, calling out for maternal affection with all the intensity of a starving infant.

Our Lady knows and loves her children. She is aware that the six year old is not as capable as an adult in focusing on the various mysteries of her Son's and her own life; thus, she provides a simpler solution. Yet she is also aware that human beings tire swiftly of repeating themselves. So, she gives the option to consider the ever-changing and ever-new images and re-creations of the scenes of the earthly life of Our Lord. Her maternal instinct provides for all of her children alike, not demanding the impossible, but granting to each soul the means most suitable to him with which to grow in the knowledge and love of Our Lord.

The second reason many shy away from the Rosary is pride.

Now, before anyone raises their metaphorical humility shields, let us all admit that as human beings, particularly adults, most souls do not like to be told that they are spiritual children. Most people do not want to reiterate the same prayer over and over again. Why? Because it's boring! There are innumerable objections to the practice. "We are adults now! Why do we have to repeat the same thing time and time again?! Surely, we are mature enough spiritually to do something a little more interesting and fitting to our age and state of life?!"

Now, while there may be some truth in the questions raised, there is a subtle trap laid inside which many fail to escape and which is eerily similar to that of the serpent in the garden of Eden. That snare is the assumption: "I should be able to talk to God on my own terms." When put bluntly in that light, most people recoil in horror. Yet, this is precisely the problem with many prayers. A human being must realise that, when it comes to talking to God, the best that he can do is baby-talk! He simply is not equipped with the adequate words to speak on the divine level. This does not, however, make such words less valuable to God; on the contrary, He is more pleased by the humble and sincere invocation of His name than He ever could be by the most intricate and complex prayer offered in a spirit of pride and self-satisfaction.

Yet a final reason the Rosary is difficult for souls is how powerful it is in gaining graces for ourselves and for others. Think about it: Does anyone really believe that the devil and his minions are pleased to hear the names of Our Lord Jesus Christ and the Blessed Virgin Mary repeatedly for fifteen to twenty minutes? Do they honestly think that the humble and heartfelt prayer of a childlike soul is something considered powerless by these fallen angels? If so, think again! The enemies of men are angels, pure spirits who know *exactly* how powerful a single, well-prayed Hail Mary can be in destroying their work. They are not about to stand idly by while countless years of their intense labour are being undone by a human being who can only talk in baby language to God. Few things arouse the ire of the devil and his fallen angels more than a Rosary prayed well. Hence, they will do all in their power to distract and disturb our fumbling attempts at doing so.

Consequently, let us not deceive ourselves. The Rosary is powerful precisely because of its humility and its simplicity. It puts us in our proper place, babbling with the tongues of infants before Almighty God. It pleases Him immensely because it pleases His Mother, and who can resist the entreaties of their mother?! This month of October, let us fly to her protection and patronage with ever more child-like fervour and insistence, taking the Rosary as our weapon of choice in the spiritual battle. The devil probably thinks to himself, "Have you sent a child to fight against me?" Like Goliath, he underestimates the power of a child who places his confidence solely in God, Who alone can give us strength in the battle.

Catechism!

Adult Catechism: Christ - King

4th October, after the 10:00am Mass.

REQUIESCANT IN PACE

In the charity of your prayers, please remember the soul of:

Mrs Marianne Bishop (Woking)

OPEN DAY!

Tell all your family and friends...

ST. MICHAEL'S
SCHOOL

A chance to experience an authentically Catholic education. Discover the school by seeing lessons, meeting with teachers, and taking a tour guided by the students themselves!

Friday, 16th October. Sign up using the QR Code.



Catholic Bros:

Holy Hour, Rosary, Confessions! Join us on Friday **16th October** at 8:30pm.

Take a hike! Saturday **17th October**. Sign up using the QR Code below.

Sean Wright speaks on the Catholic Church's influence on the ending of slavery: Friday **23rd October**.



1	Feria	7:15
2	Holy Guardian Angels 1st Fri. Holy Hr 6pm	7:15 / 19:00
3	St Therese of the Child Jesus	7:30/12:00
4	Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary	7:30, 10:00
	<i>2nd Collection/Prayers for Vocations</i>	17:00 Benediction
5	Feria of the 19th Sunday after Pentecost	7:15
6	St Bruno, Confessor	7:15
7	Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary	7:15
8	St Bridget of Sweden, Widow	7:15
9	St John Leonard, Confessor	7:15
10	St Francis Borgia, Confessor	7:30/12:00
11	The Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost	7:30, 10:00
		17:00 Benediction
12	Feria	7:15
13	St Edward, King & Confessor	7:15
14	St Callistus I, Pope & Martyr	7:15
15	St Teresa of Jesus, Virgin	7:15
16	St Hedwig, Widow	7:15
17	St Margaret Mary Alacoque, Virgin	7:30/12:00
18	Twenty-First Sunday after Pentecost	7:30, 10:00
		17:00 Benediction
19	St Peter of Alcantara, Confessor	7:30
20	St John Cantius, Confessor	7:30
21	Feria	7:30
22	Feria	7:30
23	St Anthony Mary Claret, Bishop & Confessor	7:30
24	St Raphael the Archangel	7:30/12:00
25	Feast of Christ the King	7:30, 10:00
		17:00 Benediction
26	Feria of the 22nd Sunday after Pentecost	7:30
27	Feria	7:30
28	Ss Simon & Jude, Apostles	7:30
29	Feria	7:30
30	Feria	7:30
31	Vigil All Saints (SSPX Fast Day)	7:30/12:00

OCTOBER

Sanctuary Lamp in Memory

Request that a sanctuary lamp burn in memory of a loved one or in thanksgiving for graces received. Holy Mass is celebrated for those remembered and their donors each first Wednesday of the month.

	Main Altar	Our Lady	Sacred Heart	St Joseph	St Philomena	St Anthony
Oct 4	In memory of Roger St John and Hugh Williams			In Thanksgiving	Forgotten souls	Private Intention - KS
Oct 11						
Oct 18						
Oct 25						

£10 for one 7 day lamp (Sun. - Sat.) | Cheques to the order of SSPX, Burghclere Priory | Or pay with card (machine in narthex)