

Homily based on the readings from December 2, 2025 (Isaiah 11.1-10;
Luke 10.21-24)

God always gives us what he promises, but not always in the way we expect. After generations of oppression from foreign empires, the Jewish people were awaiting a messiah, an anointed savior, to reestablish the mighty Kingdom of Israel. During the years prior to Jesus' earthly ministry, several "freedom fighters" had been acclaimed as messiah by their followers. Two in particular, Theudas and Judas the Galilean, are explicitly mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles. Nevertheless, none of these political revolutionaries could possibly fulfill the promise God had made to the Jewish people.

Jesus, of course, is a king – but not the kind of king most people at the time were anticipating. Despite receiving the royal gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, he was born in a stable and sheltered in a manger. Despite having authority over legions of angels, he commanded no soldiers, fought no battles, and won no wars. Despite

being the King of Heaven, he allowed himself to be subject to judges, governors, and emperors. Is it any wonder that so many people were unable to recognize him?

In today's Gospel, Jesus declares that "many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, but did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but did not hear it." To a certain extent, he is referring to prophets of the past – such as Isaiah, who foretold Christ's coming 700 years beforehand – and to ancient kings – such as David, who reigned another 300 years before that. These individuals were prohibited by basic chronology from encountering Jesus, at least in his human form. There is a sense, though, in which Jesus is also referring to the religious and political leaders of his own day, who "desired to see" the promised messiah – but were unable to do so because of their prejudices and preconceptions. Their own expectations prevented them from recognizing what was standing right in front of them.

Many people living today, blinded by the same misconceptions as Christ's contemporaries, still fail to acknowledge his kingship. There is another version of this error, though, that sadly afflicts a large number of modern-day Christians. For whatever reason – personal, historical, theological – they are unable to recognize that the King of Heaven is still dwelling in our midst. Either willfully or out of ignorance, they cannot accept the fact that Christ is truly present – Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity – every time we encounter him in the Holy Eucharist.

Those of us with the good fortune of being Catholic may forget how many people there are who deeply *desire to see what we see and to hear what we hear*. Every follower of Christ has a natural hunger for the Eucharist, but many have no access to the nourishment. Every time we set foot in a church, we should fall to our knees in gratitude for God's incomparable gift of his only begotten son – present in all the tabernacles of the world, even to the end of time. *Blessed are the eyes that see what we see. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.*