The so-called Church liturgical year ends this weekend in the celebration of the Solemnity of our Lord Jesus Christ as the King of the Universe. To honor Christ as our King at the culmination of the church calendar reminds us that in deed He is the “the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end” (Rev. 22:12–13). We look at the past year with gratitude for all the blessings we have received (and in a special way during Thanksgiving Day) and we look forward with hope as we begin the new liturgical season next weekend in the celebration of the First Sunday of Advent.

Speaking of gratitude, we thank the Lord for the successful Ministry Volunteer Recruitment days last weekend. The laudable efforts of the Ad Hoc Committee and the participation of many ministries and organizations helped make the event a fruitful one. The generosity of new volunteers to share their time and talent is a manifestation of the desire to fulfill one’s baptismal promise of building the Body of Christ. With God’s grace, we continue to journey together in maintaining and sustaining a life giving faith community. We expect a more detailed report of the turnout of new volunteers as we receive feedback from the different ministries and groups in the coming days.

Talking about hope, the usual apocalyptic readings we have these days should instill this beautiful virtue in us rather than fear. The first advent candle that is to be lighted is the candle of hope, remembering that we can hope in God and His promise. He is faithful and true to His Words. Since the family is the first school where children learn the value of hope, we will ask different families to light up the first advent candle in each of our parish masses this weekend. Also, we will ask couples to be joined by their children in bringing the gifts during the offertory procession. We will strive to involve families in our liturgies in many different ways as we join our beloved Pope Francis’ message at the recent Synod on Families urging everyone to appreciate the importance of the institution of the family.

Have a meaningful family day this weekend and during Thanksgiving Day!