

In case you've been living in a cave all afternoon, the Cameron High School Dragons will play for the state football championship this Friday. The players, cheerleaders, fans and coaches all deserve to be congratulated in their quest for first place. They show what people can accomplish when we work as a single body toward a common goal. To be a successful football team you have to envision perfection. You attain success not as individuals but as a team – and not just as a team, but as a team together with fans, coaches and families. Everyone forms one body. We are humans, so we do not always achieve perfection. Only God is perfect. So anytime we enter the presence of excellence, even briefly, we glimpse the perfection of God.

Today's reading from the Letter to the Colossians sings a hymn to the perfection of Christ, whom we honor today as our king. Twice this hymn calls Christ the firstborn: he is firstborn of creation and firstborn from the dead. We believe that the Trinity existed at the beginning of time. Even before Jesus was born in Bethlehem, before anything was created, Christ was already here. We believe that God the Father created everything through Christ. We say this every Sunday in our creed: "Through him all things were made." Colossians further says "all things were created through him and for him." Christ is also the goal of creation. We are here because God made us in Christ and because God made us for Christ. Christ is the goal of our lives. He is the firstborn of all creation.

Colossians also calls Jesus the firstborn from the dead. He died on the cross, rose from the dead, and showed us the path we will take to salvation, from death to new life. Luke's gospel calls Jesus the firstborn son of Mary (2:7). The Letter to the Romans calls him the firstborn within a large family of believers (8:29). He holds first place in many ways. He is first not just in time, but also in rank. He is above all things. He is our model of perfection. He gives us hope for a better world and inspires us to lead better lives.

As in football, the betterment of our lives comes not just from individuals, but from the team. It takes cooperation to build a better world. We are one body. Jesus is the head. This is how perfection is possible for us as a church. When we act as a body, Christ is our head.

From time to time in life, we get a glimpse of perfection through teamwork. It may be on the football field, at the office or with the family. The team works best when it shares a common vision. In our church, we share a vision of Christ, firstborn of creation, firstborn from the dead, firstborn son of Mary, firstborn in the family of believers. We can make a difference in our homes, our schools, our jobs and our world, when we work as one body with Christ as our king.