

There is a current among historians that on several occasions have asked the question:

What if George Washington had been the first King of America, instead of the first President?

Recently, an online researcher from *Ancestry dot Com* took the challenge, and began the process of attempting to trace the would-be royal lineage back over two centuries.

It's not easy being king.

And it's also not too easy to figure out just who would be king.

Royal succession is in itself difficult to determine because of the variations that exist in passing on the crown. For example, does the throne go only to male successors? Or in an enlightened society, should women be included in the royal succession? Is this mythical monarchy a patrilineal – only through the father's side, or is it bilineal?

Add to that what is probably the most apparent difficulty – namely, that George and Martha Washington had no children.

Tracing the line back through every possible family permutation yielded various claimants to the throne over the last two centuries who would have been the kings: Lee, Bushrod, and Spotswood. Not to mention the queens: Estella, Odelle, and Brynda.

After much time and research, the most likely royal successor was finally determined to be Paul Emery Washington. He was born in Texas in 1927, served in the US Navy, and worked until his retirement for a supply company – which interestingly was based out of Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. During his retirement he volunteered at San Antonio Zoo, and was active in the community.

But since that article was written, I have some sad news: His Royal Highness, Paul I, has gone on to his eternal reward. And so, it would seem, the hypothetical throne of America is once again up for grabs.

Today we celebrate the last Sunday of Ordinary Time, known as The Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe. The feast was

originally put forth by Pope Pius XI in 1925 in response to growing secularism and nationalism after the First World War.

And while the Scripture readings may lead our minds to the *eschaton* – that is, the end of time – the emphasis of this feast day is on the here-and-now. Writing in 1925, the pope stated that for all of us, Jesus Christ must reign in our minds ... in our wills ... in our hearts ... and in our bodies.

Christ's reign is not some distant event ... rather, we must work to make it a reality every day by our own willingness to allow Him into our lives.

As we approach this altar to receive the Sacred Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ ... let us pray for a deeper openness to God's grace ... so that we might truly allow Christ to be **our** King.

May we surrender ourselves totally to His reign ... so that His kingdom may come ... on earth ... as in heaven ... through us living out our lives ... every day ... for Jesus Christ ... in all that we say and do.