



Sunday 24th November 2024

Christ the King

The Sunday next before Advent

Gospel Reading

John 18.33-37

33 Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, ‘Are you the King of the Jews?’ 34 Jesus answered, ‘Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?’ 35 Pilate replied, ‘I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?’ 36 Jesus answered, ‘My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here.’ 37 Pilate asked him, ‘So you are a king?’ Jesus answered, ‘You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.’

Other Readings: Daniel 7.9-10,13,14 Psalm 93 Revelation 1.4b-8

Homily

Today, we celebrate the Feast of Christ the King, which concludes the Church’s liturgical year. Instituted by Pope Pius XI in 1925, this feast affirms the sovereignty of Christ and the Church over all governments, significantly when despotic rulers were rising in Europe.

Christ is our spiritual King, ruling through truth and love, with the Cross as His throne and the Beatitudes as His law. "Christ the King" is rooted in Scripture, with the Kingdom of God central to Jesus’ teachings. For example, the Magi in Matthew 2:2 asked, “Where is the baby born to be the King of the Jews?”

During Palm Sunday, they proclaimed, “God bless the King, who comes in the name of the Lord.” In His trial, Pilate asked, “Are you the king of the Jews?” and Jesus replied that He was born to bear witness to the truth. The inscription “Jesus the Nazarene, King of the Jews” was placed above His head on the Cross.

Both the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament highlight Christ’s role as King, representing Him as the ultimate ruler overall. Every King needs a Kingdom and every Kingdom a King. Christ is the King of the Kingdom of God.

The Kingdom of God is not a physical kingdom. It is a transformation of heart and mind, a way of believing and living in preparation for eternity. If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, then your citizenship is no longer “of this world” – you are a citizen of heaven.

There can be no Kingdom of God in the world without the Kingdom of God in our hearts. – says Albert Schweitzer Gerald.

The author Gerald Darring beautifully describes the Kingdom in this way.

'The Kingdom of God is a space. It exists in every home where parents and children love each other. It exists in every region and country that cares for its weak and vulnerable. It exists in every parish that reaches out to the needy.

The Kingdom of God is a time. It happens whenever someone feeds a hungry person, or shelters a homeless person, or shows care to a neglected person. It happens whenever we overturn an unjust law, or correct an injustice, or avert a war. It happens whenever people join in the struggle to overcome poverty, to erase ignorance, to pass on the faith.

The Kingdom of God is in the past (in the life and work of Jesus of Nazareth); it is in the present (in the work of the Church and in the efforts of many others to create a world of goodness and justice); it is in the future (reaching its completion in the age to come).

*The Kingdom of God is a condition. Its symptoms are love, justice, and peace.'*¹

How does all of this relate to us in the Diocese of Lincolnshire today?

As we celebrate the Kingship of Christ today, let us remember a profound truth: He is not our King if we do not listen to Him, love Him, serve Him, and follow Him. We belong to His Kingdom only when we strive to walk with Him, fully embracing the spirit of the Gospel, allowing it to permeate every aspect of our lives.

If Jesus were here today, what would be his priorities for us? What would he want for us as individuals and for His Church?

We are at the end of one church year and the beginning of another. Over the next year, as a faith family, as we grow together, as we continue our Time to Change Together, with Jesus as our source, what difference will I make, what difference will you make, and what difference will we all make in the name of Christ the King?

As I make my Eucharist today, I will reaffirm Christ as my King. Will you? Alleluia.

Amen.

Conversation Questions

1. As we reach the end of this church year and look to the next, what are your priorities and those of your church as we continue our journey of A Time To Change together?
2. Is there anything else from the passage not already discussed that speaks to you? What is it?
3. What will you do this week in your Monday-to-Saturday ministry in response to what you have heard today? #everydayfaith

Prayer

Spend some time in prayer, responding to what you have heard today and listening to what God might be saying to you.

¹ 1 (liturgy.slu.edu>ChristKingB112518>reflections

Collect of the day

*Eternal Father,
whose Son Jesus Christ ascended to the throne of heaven
that he might rule over all things as Lord and King:
keep the Church in the unity of the Spirit
and in the bond of peace,
and bring the whole created order to worship at his feet;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.*

(or)

*God the Father,
help us to hear the call of Christ the King
and to follow in his service,
whose kingdom has no end;
for he reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, one glory.*

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