

ST ALBAN'S 24/11/19 (LK.23:33- 43, COL. 1:11- 20) CHRIST THE KING SUN.

A DIFFERENT KING

“Christ the King” Sunday is a fairly recent festival.

It was started by Pope Pius XI - when he published his encyclical on 11th December 1925. It grew out of Pius' concern at how secular the world was becoming.

In those days communism was on the rise and people were beginning to think that “science would soon prove there was no God”

The first European war christened (World War 1) had shattered traditional values of faith in God – especially in the light of the horrendous numbers of people killed in war.

People were turning from God to humanism, and so Pope Pius wanted a festival where we remembered that Jesus really is King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

So you might say – as I did when I was preparing this talk “what a strange lesson we have this morning to remember “Christ the King”

How can the Picture of Jesus hanging on a Cross, with a jeering Roman sign above his head: “The King of the Jews” be appropriate for “Christ the King.”

Surely we should be remembering something mighty, e.g. Jesus and the Whip of Cords. Perhaps it would have been more appropriate to read the passage from Jn 2:12-16 - the scene where Jesus makes a whip of cords and drives the moneychangers out of the Temple. At least that would show Jesus in power!

After all – isn't kingship all about showing off one's power? Or Pomp and ceremony?. I would like to suggest to you this morning that Jesus' kingdom is *different* to worldly kingdoms. I'm sure prince Andrew for those who've been following the intrigues of the Royal family can attest to the heat of living in a palace too.

Jesus kingdom is made up of the weak and the broken-hearted – not the powerful and the strong Jesus' kingdom is made up of those who realise their unworthiness to stand in the presence of almighty God.

Jesus' Kingdom CAME through the power of the Cross – for it is through the Cross that Jesus would draw those who the Father gave him to himself. The more I thought and mulled over the passage I realised that this was EXACTLY the right passage. Christ's kingship was shown on the Cross

Our lesson this morning showing Jesus in humiliating circumstances – hanging naked on a Cross challenges us to sit up and think about the nature of God's kingdom. And for me the key to Jesus' kingship is found in Jesus immortal words:

"Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." (Lk 23:34)

That was the key why Jesus came to earth in the first place. His death enabled us to become Children of God. That is why the communion is so central to our faith. For it is there that we remember his death that opened the gates of heaven to let us in, Jesus took simple every day elements – bread and wine to help us remember.

Reflection:

So what do we need to make bread? Flour, Salt, Water, Yeast, heat source etc can these textures and components compare to the various temperaments of the different people that make the Kingdom of God?

One unknown writer had this to say about Jesus, Nineteen centuries have come and gone and today he remains the central figure of the human race, and the leader of mankind's progress. All the armies that ever marched, all the navies that ever sailed, all the parliaments that ever sat, all the kings that ever reigned, put together have not affected the life of humanity on this planet so much as that one solitary life.

Yes, Jesus Christ was someone special – Unlike Elvis Presley – Jesus Christ is the KING

Lyrics: in Christ alone my hope is found...

(Keith Getty/ Stuart Townend)

Revd Tim Ndegwa