

21 November 2021

Sermon by Isaac De Jongh.

Theme: Feast of Christ the King – His legacy.

Readings: 2 Samuel 23: 1-7; Psalm 132: 1-12(13-18); Revelation 1: 4b-8; John 18: 33-37.

Let us pray: Almighty God our creator, redeemer, sanctifier, alive at the centre of our being, you break the power of evil. And make all things new in your son Jesus Christ the king of the universe. May all in heaven and earth acclaim your glory. And never cease to praise you. May your reign, your kingdom, be recognised on earth. Amen.

Could we for a moment reflect on the readings for today. Consider these questions: *“How do you bear witness to the truth”* and *“Is Jesus Christ your King?”*

Today we observe and celebrate the feast of Christ the King, our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the universe and as lord over all creation.

On the feast of Christ the King, we are called to acknowledge that Jesus is in fact our King. On our journey of faith we were told one thing to say that He is our King because the songs in Church says so, or the preacher says so, or the Bible says so (yes, faith does come by hearing), but it is quite another for us to *personally* say that Jesus is our King.

The first reading: 2 Samuel 23:1-7;

The book of 2 Samuel continues to show us **the virtue of humility, the destructiveness of pride, and the faithfulness of God's promise.** We see David succeed and fail, and we see God's promise for a future king at the beginning and end of the story.

In 1 Samuel 8: 4-7, we read about God's promise, *“Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah and said to him, “Behold you are old and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now appoint for us a king to judge us.” And Samuel prayed to the Lord. And the Lord said to Samuel, “Obey the voice of the people in all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them.”*

It's extremely important that we remember these critical verses. Why? Because in them we hear God's people, crying for a king. God clearly explain to Samuel, even though their request for a king was an expression of their rejection of God, because of His infinite grace, God responded to their cry. And that's what the book of Samuel is about. It's about God, in His grace, giving His people a king, not just any king. The right king. And who is the right king? **David is the right king.** Even though the books of Samuel contains many characters. It is really about David. And we'll see, the books of Samuel are about David, they are ultimately about God.

The second reading: Revelation 1:4b-8; The Book of Revelation is not about the end of time nor about predictions. The people were being persecuted, and the author wanted to bolster their Faith. To the description of Jesus given here, we can apply what was said above about the Son of Man and His commission from the *Ancient One*. Today's reading

from the Book of Revelation also explains how the risen Christ will come amid the clouds as the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last of all things. In this chapter of the Book of Revelation it describes how Jesus has become our King by *freeing us from our sins by His Blood* (and so from the ruler of darkness), and by blessing all of us to be *priests for his God and Father* -- all because he loves us. Today's reading concludes by stating that Christ the King is *the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end*, that is, the A and the Z, the beginning and the end of our lives and of all life. *Alpha* and *Omega* are the first and the last letters of the alphabet in Greek, the original language of this book. Giving Jesus the **Alpha** title reminds us of the first theme John's Gospel that Jesus is the Word of God, pre-existing with the Father before all creation. To call Jesus the **Omega** is to say that he will be in charge at the end of the world. The four passages refer to the supreme Kingship of Christ who founded a Kingdom for us, where He has made us priests dedicated to the service of God his Father. He will come a second time to judge all men.

The Gospel reading: John 18: 33-37;

We are all familiar with the word – **LEGACY** and what it means. The dictionary describes *legacy* as “an amount of money or property left for someone in a will.”

Times have changed and so have the meaning of the word legacy. It's often associated with the character of a person as expressed at funerals of how we should live it out. Do we live it out? No we don't because we only remember the good things at that moment and quickly forget what was done during the living years. For many leaving a legacy is associated with the end rather than the beginning or the next phase in one's career. Your leadership is not shaped and your legacy is not defined at the end of the road but rather by the moments shared, the decisions made, the actions taken and even mistakes overcome throughout the many phases of your career.

Again, consider these questions: “*How do you bear witness to the truth*” “*Is Jesus Christ your King?*”

Do we know what type of legacy Jesus has left for you and me? He leaves the legacy of **COMPASSION, JUSTICE, PEACE, FORGIVENESS, SALVATION, KINDNESS, sincere HUMBLENESS and PERFECT LOVE**. Jesus Christ was an example to the people today of how they should be. In 1 Peter 2:21 “*It's your vocation because Christ himself suffered on your behalf, and left you an example in order that you should follow in his steps.*”

If we had to compare the legacy of Jesus Christ our King with the thoughts of modern day legacies. What would we be expressing on this feast day to the world to confirm the legacy of Jesus to make others believe that he is the messiah, our king our salvation. Whatever you remember the legacy to be, reflect for a moment and think if you ever lived it.

In today's Gospel. The Gospel is not theatre; we're not in the audience watching an ancient story unfold. No, we are *in* the story. We are not supposed to just sit back and observe what Peter, or Pontius Pilate, or James, or Mary Magdalene does. They are we and we are they. This means that when Jesus asks one of them a question, we cannot merely wait to see how he or she will answer. No, we have to answer the question.

Again, consider these questions: *“How do you bear witness to the truth” “Is Jesus Christ your King?”*

What is our answer – we as Christians should be building Gods Kingdom and the Kingdom of Christ the King and should be living his legacy for all humanity to see, in practising **COMPASSION, JUSTICE, PEACE, FORGIVENESS, SALVATION, KINDNESS, sincere HUMBLENESS and PERFECT LOVE.**

What is the Kingdom of God? What is the Kingdom of Christ the King?

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. Jesus Christ is king! We pray today that God may free all the world to rejoice in His peace, to glory in His justice, to live in His love.

God’s reign does not mirror the way worldly kingdoms operate. Worldly kingdoms depend on political posturing, military power, and the destruction of enemies. The rulers of this world have a desire to act against those who resist their will to power. They go to war, they desire more status, power and land. However, their powers are limited. The real power belongs to Jesus the King, who brings peace, who brings justice and who shows compassion and mercy.

Jesus’ kingdom is in the world and over the world but does not derive from the world’s possibilities. Instead, his kingship is built on the sovereignty of Truth and love. His destiny is to give his life for others rather than to destroying them.

Jesus’ strategy is found in direct connection with God the Father. Jesus’ kingdom has no geographical borders, no capital city, no parliament building. Jesus desires is to reign within our hearts to inspiring us to do the work that Jesus calls us to do. Is to liberate us and bring us closer to him in his most gracious kingdom. To live his legacy.

The fulfilment of his reign is what we pray every day, “your Kingdom come.” We are praying and asking Jesus’ kingdom to come on earth as it is in heaven. That kingdom will come when our hearts is transformed and when we engage in doing our part into the building of that kingdom.

So, the King we are celebrating and honouring today is one who does not need any confirmation from humans because he knows who he is. The one we are celebrating and

honouring today is the King of Love, as Henry William Baker's words express in the Hymn ((SOF) 533: "The King of Love my Shepherd is; Whose goodness faileth never." Not only this hymn, but all hymns sung today to celebrate and remember who the true King of the universe is - Jesus Christ, the Alpha and the Omega.

HERE ARE FIVE WAYS THAT YOU CAN HONOUR GOD TODAY:

1. **Honour God with your time** –How are you using the precious time you have been given to glorify God? See Psalms 144:4, Isaiah 58:13-14, and Colossians 4:5.
2. **Honour God with your talents** – These are your God-given gifts and abilities. See Matthew 25:14-30.
3. **Honour God with your temple** – This means your body. See 1 Corinthians 6:18-20.
4. **Honour God with your treasure** – This means your finances. As Jesus said, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matthew 6:21). See Proverbs 3:9 and Malachi 3:10.
5. **Honour God with your ticker** – This means your heart. There are many Bible verses that encourage us to make God number one in our heart. See Isaiah 29:13, Proverbs 3:5, Proverbs 4:23, Proverbs 23:26, and Psalm 51:10.

I love singing and one of the songs I sing in honour of our king is a hymn/ pray I fell in love with of an artist's conversion that he dedicate to God.

Have I told you lately that I love you
Have I told you there's no one else above you
You fill my heart with gladness
Take away all my sadness
Ease my troubles, that's what you do

For the morning sun and all its glory
Greets the day with hope and comfort, too
You fill my life with laughter
And somehow, you make it better
Ease my troubles, that's what you do

There's a love that's divine
And it's yours and it's mine
Like the sun
And at the end of the day
We should give thanks and pray
To the one, to the one

This king offers peace and forgiveness and governs only by the law of love. Jesus as King comes to us with great humility; no palace, no security, no attendants, no judgment — just walking among the people whether they understood him or not. Instead of waiting to be served, he reached out in service, he heals, and he feed and bring in the one who was excluded within the community.

Sometimes I think we create our own punishment by hiding ourselves behind the walls of difference, perception, pride, and superiority and judgement. We find ourselves wrapping our pound into a piece of cloth and hiding it out of fear. We hold onto it in fear instead of putting it into God's service. The more we hold onto it, the more afraid we are and the more miserable we are and make those around us unhappy.

On this day we are called and must personally affirm what the Church has always announced -the **TRUTH**: "Jesus is Lord, and He is King. He is my King. He has authority in my life." This must become more than just lip service; it must become a daily, increasing reality in our life. Today should not only be a day of observance or another day in the liturgical calendar. We should have a world party to celebrate the reign of Christ our king.

We are blinded by our ignorance and believe those in authority take "care of us", but they also have the authority to command us. We are stern followers and adhere or can reject to everything we are asked or told to do. Do we allow Christ to command us or are we more like the typical modern person who doesn't like to be told what to do? Perhaps we suffer from the milder form of this attitude in which we reduce Jesus to a King who just says pleasant things but would never rebuke us or insist upon our repentance.

At any feast or celebrations there is food to be served and this parish is always generous on such days. Today, because of the Covid pandemic we are not able to do so – we have a gift of crown cupcakes this morning - a representation of Christ as king, you can have when you leave the church.

Let us commit ourselves to making this, an everyday celebration. To honour and celebrate our Lord and King in living out his legacy for the world to see and all humanity to bear witness to the TRUTH – Jesus Christ our King. Amen.