**Sermon – Christ the King**

Today is the last Sunday of the Church’s year; it’s where we celebrate the feast of Christ the King – a fitting end to what we refer to as the Kingdom period. We have all grown up seeing Christ as King but as a tradition it is relatively new; it only goes back to 1925 when Pope Pius IX proclaimed it as a feast day. 1925 was a dark time in our history; the treaty at the end of the War to end all wars was poorly conceived and was leading its way to the next big conflict; the Second World War. There was depression over most of the Western world; it was a dark time and Pope Pius wanted to add a little light to that darkness. Little did he think that the darkness was going heading its way and was going to be around as the world hurtled towards another war. He wrote: ‘true peace can only be found under the Kingship of Christ as "Prince of Peace.’ How fitting then and is still relevant today.

But this King; our King is not like any other King. I know that our present Queen has already been recognised as a servant of the nation and she **is**; even now as she struggles to fulfil her duties, she is always wanting to serve this her nation. But in Jesus’ time the notion of King was not one of serving but of absolute power in their authority; that power came from the top down to the worthless ordinary people. But Jesus wanted to change that and make the power come from the bottom up to the top. This King **valued** the ordinary people; he valued the children and women who in his day (and ours) are/were voiceless. Jesus’ Kingdom is a topsey turvey Kingdom; in Jesus’ Kingdom it is not the biggest and strongest; the loudest and richest lording it over the weakest; but the greatest are in charge **through service**.

His is the Kingdom where might and money mean nothing in terms of a person’s value, but where humility and sacrifice mean everything.

His is the Kingdom where the weak are not despised but loved. His is the Kingdom where all people are treated equally.

Look at any prophet from the Old testament and they were looking for and expecting one in authority; their power was absolute; they would have dominion over all the people; the king would rule over the people and the people would serve the king.

But the topsey turvey Kingdom that we see from the New Testament readings; from John and Revelation suggest something very different; here we read of a king who loves us. This Messiah would restore the Kingdom ruling on behalf of the Lord. Pilate the Roman overlord, the man with power in this place asks Jesus: ‘Are you the King of the Jews’ And Jesus answers obliquely ‘My kingdom is not from this world. I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.’

This King was different. This King was not the Messiah that the Jews had been waiting for and for that he was a disappointment. They were wanting one with power and dominion as shown in Daniel whereas the King we have in the New Testament is a Prince of Peace. This is a King who has come to serve; he washes the feet of his disciples.

But let’s be clear on this though Jesus was no walk over; he was a radical; a revolutionary. For Jesus was starting a revolution, and it was a revolution that would change the face of the planet. But it wasn’t a revolution that used force of arms to achieve its end.

1925 portrays a dark time in human history. When Pius proclaimed the feast of Christ the King was another dark time. And as we conclude this year, 2021, I think we recognise that we are in another dark period of human history on many different fronts.

Our world seems to be sinking into increasing global frenzy. At a local level, prejudices and divisions continue to grow; on a global level we are anything but united in our thoughts; we are worrying more about what the world can do for us rather than what we can do for the world as we anxiously anticipate the increase of global warming and knowing this we could descend into the depths of a darkness never experienced before where those who use the least amount of energy will suffer the most; that is topsey turvey and for us to turn that round so that the Kingdom is open for all it will need a radical turn round of our own vales into ones that are for the weakest; voiceless people.

So! together with our King, we must move forward speaking out for a better world and we can do this through sacrifice and service. Surely, we need to be turning things round so that the most powerful do not have that absolute power; so that those who bully will not win the battles; so that the richest will not make all the decisions that will make them richer. So, as we enter this dark period in our history let us take a light with us; let us have the light of our Christ the King showing us a way to a brighter future where the poorer nations of the world will have value.

We have heard Jesus call us to follow him. We have listened to his voice, heard his invitation and have chosen to be subject to his just and gentle rule in the Kingdom of God: The only Kingdom where true peace will be found. This is the King and the Kingdom where we are called to share with the world.