

Our Lord, Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, 26 November 2023

Scriptures: Ezek.34:11-12,15-17; 1Cor.15:20-26; Matt.25:31-46

Homily: Fr. Ken

In today's Gospel, Jesus tells Pontius Pilate that his kingdom, his world, is not of this world, but is a world that bears witness to the truthfulness of who people are, the goodness of relationships, and is a place where people show mercy toward those in need.

In Jesus' world, people look after one another and care for one another. They are generous to those who are poor, and share their goods with others.

Jesus speaks of bearing witness to the truth that each person is created good by God, given the gift of human freedom, and called to love others in rich and strong relationships.

Jesus witnesses to this world when he helps the woman who is crippled to stand up straight. He continues this by forgiving those who have sinned. He washes the feet of his friends to show them the example of love.

In essence, the world of Jesus, his kingdom, is one of service in which the power and example of love shines forth.

On this feast celebrating Jesus Christ, our brother and the Son of God, we are called to carefully examine our hearts in the light of the attitude and actions of Christ.

The invitation of Jesus, who is both leader and servant, is for each of us to become persons who serve and reach out to those in need. This is the message of the Gospel today, and this is exactly what our St. Rita parish has been doing in many different ways in its history, especially the past decade and a half.

At the same time, when we examine our emotions, we may discover in ourselves some deeply hidden violent attitudes toward other people, toward groups of people whom we do not like, toward people of other nationalities, ethnic backgrounds, economic status, political persuasions, or religious traditions.

What we are called to do, is to discover the truth about ourselves and offer this to the healing grace of our merciful God. When we find such attitudes in ourselves, then we can ask Jesus to show us his mercy and to heal our hearts.

Advent, which begins next week, is the time of preparation for Christmas, when we can become ever-better followers of Jesus Christ. By the grace of our loving God, we can be faithful followers of Jesus, honestly living the values and virtues of justice, love, truth, and peace.

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