

Branston with Nocton and Potterhanworth

Christ the King 22nd November

20:20 VISION

Collect for Christ the King

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.

Matthew 25.31-46

“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry

and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.’ Then he will say to those at his left hand, ‘You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ Then they also will answer, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?’ Then he will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’ And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

Next Sunday we begin Advent; our time of preparation for Christmas. Before that, we are asked to reflect upon Christ the King. When Jesus was asked by Pilate if he was a King, Jesus replied that he was a King. So, what sort of King was Jesus?

He was born in a small, poor and unimportant village. His parents were not famous, powerful or wealthy. His first visitors were the poorest of people; shepherds. He never wrote a great novel. He didn't eat or associate with rich or powerful people. He never led an army into battle. He did ask people to take up their cross and follow him. He didn't surround himself with politicians, soldiers or bankers. He did sit and eat with people who were usually despised, ignored and rejected. He reached out to embrace those, others saw as worthless and as sinners. He didn't live in a castle surrounded by maids or servants. He did spend his time with the poor, the sick, the broken and all those who were in need of love, healing and compassion. He didn't own anything. He didn't have any riches or wealth that the world thought much of; but he did share his greatest possession with us; God's love.

For thus says the Lord God: I myself will search for my sheep, and will seek them out. As shepherds seek out their flocks when they are among their scattered sheep, so I will seek out my sheep. The shepherd that is described in Ezekial 34 is the King we are asked to follow. This shepherd is one who is caring and compassionate towards us. This shepherd looks for the lost, bandages the wounded and makes the weak strong. This is the shepherd and King we are asked not only to follow, but whose life and example we are asked to live by. Just as he looks after and cares for each of us, so we in turn are to care for each other. At this time there is nothing more important.

Where are we to look for and find Jesus our King today? Jesus is to be found in the hungry, the thirsty, the naked, the homeless, the poor, the rejected and those in prison. We are to turn our attention to each other if we are to find Jesus.

This gospel is not about some unknown time in the future but the here and now, it is about each one of us and how we follow Jesus. So if we open our hearts as well our eyes we will see Christ the King in everyone we meet.

Jesus is King and we are His body in the world. Therefore we belong to a royal household. May we treat each other with the dignity and respect as members of that household.



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