**Nov. 24 & 25,2018 All Saints Parish**

**Christ the King Sunday Kathy Osbelt**

Christ the King

Today is the feast of Christ the King. That title is a bit off-putting given what it has come to signify in the secular world of power and entitlement. For an earthly king or president is about fame, glory, wealth and authority.

We have that title because when countries were warring against one another and the political animosity was at an all time pitch, Pope Pius the XI wrote in a 1925 encyclical: “Men had thrust Jesus Christ and his holy law out of their lives.” The Pope urged people to look to the peace of Christ in the Kingdom of Christ, otherwise there would be no real peace.

This feast is about acknowledging what the first reading declares: all dominion and glory, all people, nations and languages serve Christ.

Recently I led a group of pilgrims to Rome and Assisi. I brought them to a multi media show called “Il Guidizio Universale”, the Last Judgment. It is about the painting of Michelangelo’s in the Sistine Chapel on the altar wall depicting the second coming of Christ and the final judgment on all humanity. Two things struck me about this painting. First of all, no one goes it alone. Either persons are sent to hell in the company others or they ascend as the blessed ones with the saints and angels. Secondly, when Michelangelo was contemplating the painting, he thought of Jesus judgment words: “For I was hungry, and you game me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me. I was ill and you comforted me, in prison and you came to visit me.” (Matt 25:33)

This is the evidence of the Reign of Christ, this is the testimony on behalf of one who listened to the words of Christ and followed them. This is a person who walks in the Reign of Christ, who knows the truth of which Christ spoke.

This is the truth that Jesus, in today’s Gospel speaks of…that he came to proclaim. But Pilate is not about truth.

Pilate is about keeping his power, his wealth, his earthly glory. He already messed up a few times with the Jewish people and can’t afford to lose his position. He had his soldiers hang images of Caesar in the temple. This infuriated the Jews so they surrounded Pilate’s palace for 6 days and nights, praying out loud. When Pilate threatens to kill them they call his bluff by sticking out their necks. He is enraged and humiliated so takes down the images. He decides to beef up his popularity ratings. Knowing that the people need fresh water, he has an aqueduct built but he used the Temple treasury funds to do it. Caiaphas and the Temple Council are infuriated. The Jewish people riot and some are killed. Pilate is rebuked by Rome.

So now, here Pilate asking Jesus if he is a king. Jesus proclaims that his kingdom is not of this earth. His kingdom then is no threat to Pilate. But Pilate can’t send this innocent man back to the temple priests. He is caught in great fear. Fear of losing his position, his power, his fame, his easy retirement!

Jesus on the other hand, has no fear. His truth is why he came. He has brought in the Reign of Love. He has no earthly goods to declare, no need for approval, no self-centered desires. **Jesus’ truth sets everyone free from all of that.**

We may ask what truth are our lives based on? That may be a good question to ask ourselves during this last week of the liturgical year. Am I walking in the reign of God? How can I know that? We can know that by looking in your check book, how are your earthly goods spent? Are they directed toward the reign of God? How is your time spent? Is it dedicated toward the “least of these?” What do you dream about, wish for, and use your energies toward? Is there room in your life to daily give thanks and ask for guidance? Who or what rules over your life? If you can answer these questions then…to quote Jesus:

“**Then you will know the truth and the truth will set you free.”**

**Amen!**