

TRINITY NEWS

The Festival of Christ the King – The Shepherd King

We celebrate the Festival of Christ the King today. We refer to him as “King” in our hymns, as in “The king of love my shepherd is, whose goodness faileth never”. But he was indeed a strange ‘king’. The taunting title “King of the Jews” was placarded over his head at the Cross in Hebrew, Latin and Greek, but he was crucified there as a criminal for unproven charges that included treason and threatening the destruction of the Temple.

This week the princes of economies, nations, worldly power, great riches and accompanying poverty all too often have appeared in our country with their privileges and status and clout that demand respect in our world.

Jesus was born in a stable and he acquired no wealth or power in his life. The title “rabbi” that was given to him was honorific, not an official title with the blessing of Jewish religious leaders. There were occasions when he did not know where he would sleep, and he had few influential friends.

During the Temptations of Christ in the desert he experienced the many faces of evil worn by the Tempter, taunting with the power of collective evil, all the aspects of the negative and destructive drawn together in one sinister package. This may be why the writer of the letter to the Hebrews says with conviction, “We have one who was tempted in every respect as we are, yet apart from sin”(4:15).

Christ had within him the stillness of the hush before creation that inspires wisdom drawn from silence. This wisdom is hugely stabilizing and creative in response to both negatives and positives alike. He didn’t want to be someone, because he was already assured of his role as the Shaliach of God, the agent who becomes the Sender. He was seamlessly connected to us via his seamless connection with the Creator of all of us.

“And looking at those who sat around him, he said, ‘Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother’” (Mark 3:34-35). He wanted us to be his brother and sister and mother and father and his child. The words of Proverbs 27:19 could well apply to him: “As water reflects face to face, so the heart of man reflects the man”. This is a literal translation of the Hebrew text. It is not inclusive language but it is deeply true for all of us. Jesus the Christ comes as the Universal Pilgrim, sitting on a beast of burden, feet brushing the ground, not a king with a monarch’s scepter. They broke his heart, but not his will or his capacity for love unceasing.

Bishop Arthur Jones

THIS WEEK:

Wednesday.

- Bible Study, 10am.
- Group Discussion, 7:30pm, Parish office

Thursday.

- Thanksgiving service, 6:00pm followed by a Thanksgiving dinner, at the Parish Hall.

NEXT WEEK:

- NCCP SUNDAY, 9:30am.

NEXT SUNDAY’S READINGS:

Zechariah 14:4-9; Psalm 50;
1 Thessalonians 3:9-13;
Luke 21:25-31