

November 26, 2006  
Solemnity of Christ the King (B)

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Daniel 7:13-14  
Psalm 93:1-2, 5  
Revelation 1:5-8  
John 18: 33-37

## *God's kingdom is hidden in this world for us to discover.*

One can imagine that Pilate probably breathed a sigh of relief when Jesus admitted to being a king of somewhere other than this world. He might have even breathed another sigh when he realized that this pathetic looking man, bruised and beaten, standing before him, did not even have his own group of rabble-rousers to make some kind of claim for a worldly kingdom.

The whole thing must have seemed to Pilate rather petty – a case of ridiculous infighting among this strange Jewish religion he was to keep in line for the sake of the peace of the empire. For Pilate it was just another day with irritating problems to address.

Yet, for those who know the truth, it was anything but “just another day.” For, in the midst of a trial and execution of a common and ordinary looking man, the Son of God was acknowledged as a king and enthroned as victor over sin and death. By a common execution, the kingdom of God was firmly established and the course of all creation would be changed forever. All of this in the midst of a day that Pontius Pilate and the rest of the world – save for a handful of faithful followers – would see as a normal, ordinary

day, one with no apparent feats of the gods, no historic uprisings, no feats of nature!

Isn't this the way that the kingdom of God has unfolded ever since the day Jesus met with Pilate – in the common and ordinary acts of life? While there are at times extraordinary events – clearly the resurrection and the giving of the Spirit on Pentecost and the occasional miracle – for the most part, the kingdom of God unfolds in our midst without people recognizing it. Christ our king walks among us not in regal robes or with a motorcade and bodyguards, but in the poor we pass on the street, the neighbor who struggles with cancer, the relative who drives us crazy – especially at holidays like Thanksgiving. Christ is always in our midst and, like Pilate, we often do not recognize him. Christ is at work most often not in the actions of the Pope, but in the example a mother sets for her son, the encouraging word a father speaks to his daughter, the kindness neighbor shows to neighbor, the efforts of school kids to collect food and clothing for poor people they will never see. Christ is at work not only when there are apparent victories of good over evil but in the struggle of a politician trying to figure out how to legislate justly, in the business person who refuses to cheat even though it will cut into profit. Christ's kingdom unfolds in bits and pieces when you and I choose right over wrong, self-giving over self-serving,

hope over despair, caring over indifference, and integrity over duplicity.

Christ speaks to us when we read the Scriptures in our own language, and feeds us when we bring common elements of bread and wine to the altar. All around us, in every part of the world, at every second of the day, Christ is making his kingdom a reality in our midst, and is doing it in ways that are so common and ordinary that people do not easily recognize it anymore than did the Roman procurator and the citizens. This bread and wine we share, this gathering of different people, all conceal the presence and the power of God that enable us to see and proclaim Christ as King always and everywhere. For this we give praise and thanks.

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this world for us to discover.