

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

You say that I am a king.

‘Are you the king of the Jews?’ Pilate asked. Jesus replied, ‘Do you ask this of your own accord, or have others spoken to you about me?’ Pilate answered, ‘Am I a Jew? It is your own people and the chief priests who have handed you over to me: what have you done?’ Jesus replied, ‘Mine is not a kingdom of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, my men would have fought to prevent my being surrendered to the Jews. But my kingdom is not of this kind.’ ‘So you are a king then?’ said Pilate. ‘It is you who say it’ answered Jesus. ‘Yes, I am a king. I was born for this, I came into the world for this: to bear witness to the truth; and all who are on the side of truth listen to my voice.’

■ The Gospel of the Lord.



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Breaking Open the Word



THE SAVING WORD

OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, KING OF THE UNIVERSE / B

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WITNESSING TO THE TRUTH

In the ancient world, the monarchy was understood as a sacred institution. The ruler was appointed, sustained, and legitimated by the gods. The king was understood to rule with the blessing of the gods and acted on their behalf in the human sphere. Notwithstanding this perception of the dignity of the monarchy, Israel's experience of this institution was a mixed one – not all rulers exhibited the qualities which the psalms and prophets spoke of as desirable and necessary in a monarch.

Today's readings invite us at the end of the Church's year to ponder anew the nature of Jesus' kingship and the royal dignity each of us shares by virtue of our baptism. Pilate was confronted with the problem of determining Jesus' identity and whether he was guilty of the crime of sedition. After some questioning, Jesus' identity as a king emerges, but in an unexpected manner. As king, Jesus' role is not that of earthly rule but of bearing witness to the truth about the God who sent him into the world.

The kingship of Jesus is proclaimed in the reading from the Apocalypse but in such a way that the reader never loses sight of the manner in which it was most clearly given expression. Jesus' death on the cross is the means by which we are once again reconciled to God and is the source of the dignity of all those who are baptised. It is by witnessing to the truth that we exercise the dignity which has been given to us in baptism.

Christopher Monaghan CP

FIRST READING

Dan 7:13-14

A reading from the prophet Daniel

His sovereignty is eternal.

I gazed into the visions of the night.
And I saw, coming on the clouds of heaven,
one like a son of man.
He came to the one of great age
and was led into his presence.
On him was conferred sovereignty,
glory and kingship,
and men of all peoples, nations and languages
became his servants.
His sovereignty is an eternal sovereignty
which shall never pass away,
nor will his empire ever be destroyed.

■ The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Ps 92:1-2, 5. R. v. 1

R. The Lord is king;
he is robed in majesty.

1. The Lord is king, with majesty enrobed; /
the Lord has robed himself with might, / he
has girded himself with power. **R.**
2. The world you made firm, not to be
moved; / your throne has stood firm from of
old. / From all eternity, O Lord, you are. **R.**
3. Truly your decrees are to be trusted. /
Holiness is fitting to your house, / O Lord,
until the end of time. **R.**

SECOND READING

Apoc 1:5-8

A reading from the book of Apocalypse

*The ruler of the kings of the earth . . . made us a
line of kings, priests to serve his God.*

Jesus Christ is the faithful witness, the First-born from the dead, the Ruler of the kings of the earth. He loves us and has washed away



our sins with his blood, and made us a line of kings, priests to serve his God and Father; to him, then, be glory and power for ever and ever. Amen. It is he who is coming on the clouds; everyone will see him, even those who pierced him, and all the races of the earth will mourn over him. This is the truth. Amen. ‘I am the Alpha and the Omega’ says the Lord God, who is, who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.

■ The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Mk 11:9, 10

Alleluia, alleluia! Blessed is he who inherits the kingdom of David our father; blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Alleluia!