

Reflections on Sunday's Readings: November 25, 2018



'I came into the world to testify to the truth....'

John 18, 13

The Solemnity of Christ the King of the Universe [B]

Daniel 7: 13-14

Revelation 1: 5-8

John 18: 33b-37

Introduction

This past summer I celebrated the marriage of a cousin, Liz, and her fiancé, Jared. I had had her sister's wedding, Tricia, and her fiancé, Ryan's, wedding three years before. Tricia was Liz's "matron of honor," and she shared that Liz was very dear to her in her toast at the reception. 'They were sisters, but even more the best of friends.'

One example was that they liked to do things together even if only one of them was good at something. Trish explained that they both joined sports teams, but often Liz would be the one weaving bracelets and necklaces out of the clover while Trish was scoring the goals on the field! But they wanted to be together.

Trish also shared that Liz never missed an opportunity to greet her when she would come back from school or traveling for work. Liz would make the time to be there with a sign or dressed up in some enjoyable way to welcome her home.

"Apocalyptic" Literature

This image came to mind as I reflected on the readings for this feast day of Christ the King. Last week we heard how the "apocalyptic" literature of the Bible – the kind of readings we hear toward the end of the Church year – is not meant to frighten us but to actually "uncover" (the meaning of the word itself) the **meaning of life**, the trajectory or direction of creation and

especially of the human family. These readings help us know that all is truly in the hands of God, and a loving God!

Welcome home!

This feast today brings home for us that there is a “Someone” at the heart of creation, at the center of evolution, and at the development of the human family. There is a “Someone” waiting for us personally and as a human family to **“welcome us home.”** Jesus the Christ is waiting with outstretched arms and a smile to receive us. He is waiting to say “Welcome home, Kathy! Welcome home, Michael! Welcome home, Joan! Welcome home, Maria!” At the heart of life is a “Someone” who loves us and wants us to be free and to be fully at home with him in heaven!

From the Beginning

This feast also brings home to us that from the beginning of time, from the beginning of creation, this Someone, the Christ, has been the **model for us**. Deep within the life and love of the Trinity ... where there is this deep giving and receiving of love ... God hopes for the time we all will share in this communion of life and love. God hopes for all of us to grow in the fullness of life, the freedom, and the abundant love of the Word in the heart of the Trinity. The Word, the Son, stands at the heart of creation.

Jesus the Christ Comes for Encounter

That we might know this ... it’s always been a part of God’s plan to meet us **“heart to heart”** ... Jesus the Christ comes into our human form and into the human family. Jesus comes that we might know our true dignity and true freedom.

This is the person we see before Pilate in the Gospel story today. Unlike ourselves in this kind of trial situation, Jesus is most free in this difficult situation. He has not come to win or to conquer Pilate and the Romans or the Jewish leaders. Jesus has come to speak the “truth” that he knows from the heart of the Trinity. There is no violence in the heart of God. There is only goodness, beauty, truth, and generous love. Jesus knows this “truth” profoundly, and he hopes only to help all of creation and all in the human family to know this truth and to live by it, to spread it throughout all of creation.

A New World

Jesus knows that the real treasure of life is **“relationship.”** We might take some time this week to imagine a world focused not on prestige, power, or position; not focused on wealth and luxuries; but focused on sharing life and communion with others.

Jesus speaks to us with his words and actions about **right relationship with God**, right relationship and peacefulness with **ourselves**, right relationship and justice with our **neighbors**, and right relationship and caring for **creation**. This is God’s hope for us, and this is the message and mission of Jesus. Right relationship in all of these ways is the meaning of the Jewish word **“shalom.”** Peace!

What a difference this would make in terms of our global community if we believed that we are loved so deeply and that love is the heart of all of life! This would be challenging to our politics,

our economics, our religious institutions, and our global relationships. We would be building on the goodness that is in us and in the human family, but it would also be very “countercultural” to what we see and experience now. This is the “reign of God, the kin-dom of God!”

Conclusion: Alpha and Omega

This feast helps us see that this Jesus the Christ is ever drawing us into this kind of world and this kind of peaceful, non-violent communion. It is the strength of the **love** at the heart of God **modeled and enfleshed in Christ** ... that is our Alpha and Omega, our beginning and end, **our origin and our destiny**.

This is the on-going evolution and development that God is about in creation and in the human family, and we are invited to share in this mission of Jesus the Christ.

Let us pray for one another to “say yes” to all of the inspirations that come from this Christ in our lives and to be courageous! Let us be bold, and not afraid, to follow this Christ, our Brother and Friend! Let us let him lead us!

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