

## Christ as King – Last Sunday after Trinity. 25th November 2018

President Trump is well known for his ‘tweeting’ the first thing that comes into the vacant space that he calls his mind and, consequently, it causes endless problems for his officials who must contain the damage. Recently, the Catholic Archbishop of Brisbane, Mark Coleridge, has also got himself into a similar predicament with his tweets. In his responding to a tweet stating that *“Most people want Jesus as a consultant rather than a King,”* Archbishop Mark Coleridge remarked, *“Not too sure I want (or have) him as either.”* The responses were quick, asking him what is he actually celebrating on today’s feast of Christ the King, or this, *“Is this Archbishop Coleridge's authentic Twitter page? I find it unbelievable that an archbishop would make this statement. Please clarify”*. In this particular case the Archbishop did clarify what he was driving at with a quote from today’s Gospel reading, *‘Pilate said to Jesus: “Art Thou the King of the Jews?” ... Jesus answered: “My Kingdom is not of this world”*’. If only he had said that in his first tweet as it would have saved him a lot of bother.

So, on this feast day we need to remind ourselves of what our Lord has said about his legitimate status as a king by being a descendant of King David. David and his royal descendants were known as the ‘Anointed’ – ‘Messiah’ in Hebrew and ‘Christ’ in Greek. At the time of our Lord’s earthly ministry many of his people wanted kings like David and Solomon to restore the empire of David, to get rid of the Romans and the filthy gentiles, and make the land holy unto the Lord. For this reason, our Lord avoided using the designation of *Messiah* because of these associations. Instead he used a different title, the *‘Son of Man’*, which is found in the books of Ezekiel and Daniel. There were other reasons as well. If the populous wanted a king, the Sadducees and aristocratic High Priestly families and the elders (the nobility) did not, as they gained their political authority by cooperating and accepting Roman rule via the family of King Herod or later by the direct governorship of Pilate and others. You can pick up on this with Caiaphas being anxious about our Lord’s triumphal entry into Jerusalem and being greeted as the Son of David - and what the Romans might do if Jesus is accepted by the people, *“it is better for you to have one man die for the people than to have the whole nation destroyed”*.

We are right in proclaiming Christ as King; the difficulty is to dress that up in the images of earthly royalty. His throne was the Cross, his glory is the Resurrection, his bounty to us is forgiveness and eternal life. His victory is the defeat of Death and the evil one. His empire is in the embracing the totality of the human race into his own life and being. His decrees and laws are the Gospel. It is at that this point of interaction that the claim that politics and religion are two separate and distinct spheres. That is an American heresy that is increasingly used by Australian politicians to exclude the Christian faith from every aspect of civil life. The consequences are an increasingly intolerant society that cannot accept alternative views to the dictatorship of atheistic liberalism that hates any view point not their own.

As Christians, we need Christ the Universal King as the ultimate standard and measure of all who claim authority. That there is an eternal truth that is not an ideal but a Person who is the Way, the Life and the Truth. That is the reason that all dictators want control or eliminate the Church, for it believes in that Truth that judges them and their behaviour.

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour.

To him, be glory and dominion for ever and ever.