



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

ANGELUS

Saint Peter's Square
Sunday, 25 November 2018

Multimedia

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Good morning!

The Solemnity of Christ, King of the Universe, which we celebrate today, is set at the conclusion of the liturgical year and recalls that the life of creation does not advance at random, but proceeds toward a final destination: the definitive manifestation of Christ, Lord of history and of all creation. The conclusion of history will be his eternal kingdom. Today's Gospel passage (cf. Jn 18:33-37) speaks to us about this kingdom, the kingdom of Christ, the kingdom of Jesus, recounting the humiliating situation that Jesus is in after being arrested in Gethsemane: bound, insulted, accused and led before the authorities of Jerusalem. And then, he is presented to the Roman prosecutor, as one who seeks to undermine political power, to become the king of the Jews. So Pilate conducts his inquest and, in a dramatic interrogation, twice asks Jesus *if He is a king* (cf. vv. 33, 37).

And Jesus initially responds that his kingship "is not of this world" (v. 36). Then he states: "You say that *I am a king*" (v. 37). It is evident from his entire life that Jesus does not have political ambitions. Let us recall that after the multiplication of the loaves, the people, excited by the miracle, would have sought to proclaim him king, to overturn the Roman power and reestablish the kingdom of Israel. But for Jesus the kingdom is something else, and it is certainly not achieved by revolt, violence and the force of arms. This is why he withdrew alone to pray on the mount (cf. Jn 6:5-15). Now, in responding, He makes Pilate take note that His disciples did not fight to defend Him. He says: "if my kingship were of this world, my servants would fight, that I might not be handed over to the Jews" (Jn 18:36).

Jesus wants to make it understood that above and beyond political power there is another even greater one, which is not obtained by human means. He has come to earth to exercise this power, which is love, by *bearing witness to the truth* (cf. v. 37), the divine truth which ultimately is the essential message of the Gospel: “God is love” (1 Jn 4:8); and he wishes to establish in the world his kingdom of love, justice and peace. And this is the kingdom of which Jesus is king, and which extends until the end of times. History teaches us that kingdoms founded on the force of arms and on the abuse of power are fragile and sooner or later collapse. But the Kingdom of God is founded on his love and is rooted in hearts — the Kingdom of God is rooted in hearts —, conferring peace, freedom and fullness of life upon those who embrace it. We all want peace; we all want freedom and we want fulfilment. And how do you do this? Allow the love of God, the Kingdom of God, the love of Jesus, to take root in your heart and you will have peace, you will have freedom and you will have fulfilment.

Today Jesus asks us to *allow him to become our king*. A king who, with his word, his example and his life immolated on the cross saved us from death, and — this king — indicates the path to those who are lost, gives new light to our existence marred by doubt, by fear and by everyday trials. But we must not forget that Jesus’ kingdom *is not of this world*. He will give new meaning to our life — at times even put to difficult tests through our mistakes and our sins — merely on the condition that we not follow the logics of the world and of its ‘kings’.

May the Virgin Mary help us to welcome Jesus as the king of our life and to spread his kingdom, by bearing witness to the truth which is love.

Dear brothers and sisters, yesterday Ukraine commemorated the anniversary of the *Holodomor*, a terrible famine brought about by the Soviet regime that caused millions of deaths. The image is painful. May the wound of the past be an appeal to all that such tragedy never again be repeated. Let us pray for that dear country and for the peace so greatly desired.

I greet all of you pilgrims, coming from Italy and from many countries: the families, parish groups, associations. In particular I greet the many choirs who have come for their Third International Conference in the Vatican, and I thank them for their presence and for their valuable service to the liturgy and to evangelization. Many thanks!

I greet those participating in the Congress on fertility, promoted by the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart on the 50th anniversary of [Saint Paul VI](#)’s Encyclical *Humanae Vitae*; as well as the law students of the ‘Università Roma Tre’ and the faithful from Pozzuoli, Bacoli and Bellizzi. I greet the members of the ‘Istituto Ranchibile’ of Palermo. And my compliments, because you have been brave! To come here in this rain! You are brave! Well done!

And I wish everyone a happy Sunday. And please, do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch.

Arrivederci!

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