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CHRIST THE KING A

26th November 2023

A short act of worship and daily devotions

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Opening prayers

You are our King, Lord Jesus,
and this Christ-the-King Sunday, I come to worship you.
As I prepare to go into Advent, and to celebrate your incarnation,
I take this time to thank you and praise you, Lord Jesus.

In my preparations, I take a moment to say sorry.
Lord, I have fallen short, I am sorry.

In my preparations, allow me to encounter grace.
Lord, I know I am forgiven, loved and set free.

In my preparations, I give thanks for all I have received.
Lord, today I am thank for so much.

Come and make your presence known to me, by your Spirit, during this time of worship,
In Jesus' name I pray,
Amen.

You may now wish to say the Lord's Prayer in a version or translation with which you are familiar

Song/Hymn:

Spend a minute listening to this hymn and sing along if you feel comfortable:
713 STF – Show me how to stand for justice - [YouTube](#)

Reading: Matthew 25:31-46 – [Click for reading](#)

Responding to the reading

In today's gospel reading, Jesus presents a powerful parable that challenges us to the core of our faith. He describes a scene where the Son of Man returns in glory to judge the nations. He separates the people as a shepherd separates sheep from goats, with the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

The criteria for judgment are not based on theological knowledge, grandiose deeds, or social status. Rather, Jesus identifies Himself with the marginalised, the needy, the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick, and the imprisoned. He says, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

This reflection challenges us to look at our lives and ask: Are we actively seeking out the "least of these" and ministering to them in love and compassion? It's easy to get caught up in our busy lives, our goals, and our personal pursuits, but Jesus reminds us that our faith is deeply intertwined with how we treat those who are vulnerable and in need.

Consider these questions:

- How often do we see the face of Jesus in the homeless person on the street, the refugee seeking shelter, the neighbour facing illness, or the prisoner yearning for redemption?

- Are we actively using our time, resources, and talents to make a positive impact on the lives of those who are suffering and marginalised?
- Do we prioritise acts of kindness and service to the "least of these" as a fundamental expression of our love for Christ?

Jesus' message is clear: Our faith is not merely about attending church, saying prayers, or professing beliefs. It's about radical love in action—loving our neighbours, especially those in distress, as if we were loving Christ himself.

As you meditate on Matthew 25:31-46, ask yourself: How can I live out this challenge in my daily life? How can I extend God's love to those society often overlooks? In doing so, we become vessels of God's transformative love, bringing light and hope to a world in need.

Responding in music

You might like to listen to this sing, recorded virtually for Peace Sunday 2020 in partnership with the Fellowship of Reconciliation and the Joint Public Issues Team - [YouTube](#)

As you listen, think about the questions raised above. How can you be part of a movement of justice? What organisations (like the Fellowship of Reconciliation, the Joint Public Issues Team, All We Can, Action for Children or other similar charities) could you support with your time, your money, your prayers?

Blessing

And now, I go from this place, inspired by your message of inclusivity, Lord God.

And now, I rise to head out into a world where all are welcome, where there is space for grace to work in every one's life, where I have a responsibility to share your kingdom with the 'least of these'.

I go to do all that I can, in the name of love.

Amen.

Prayers and Prayer Pointers for the Week Ahead

Monday 27th November

- If you can, take a walk in your neighbourhood or garden, and use the time to pray for your community, your neighbours, and the world.
- Each time you come to a corner or a crossroads, pray that God will help people facing a difficult decision today to know which way to go. If that's you, use the time to listen to what God might be prompting within you.

Tuesday 28th November

- Read a short Bible passage slowly, multiple times. Allow the words to penetrate your heart and listen for what God might be saying to you. You can choose one that you find helpful, or if you can't think of a passage -start with Psalm 130.

Wednesday 29th November

- Intercessions: Make a list of five people and three concerns you want to lift up in prayer. Spend a few minutes during the day praying for them. You might like to break it up and come back to one thing on your list each hour during the day.

Thursday 30th November

- As the Advent season is about to begin, walk through your home, praying for each room and its inhabitants. Ask for God's presence and blessings to fill your home, and to help you prepare a room to encounter the incarnate God this season.

Friday 1st December

- The calendars are opening, the candles are lit, the countdown has begun.
- In the busyness and business of this season, how will you find peace and tranquility? How will you find connection with God and with others? You might like to write down a couple of suggestions or ideas for yourself and pray about them.

Saturday 2nd December

- Find a piece of music or music style that you find relaxing or which helps invite you into a prayerful space. Something like this, if you find the Celtic style helpful - [YouTube](#)
- Spend as long as you can just sitting, still, and listening. Let the music wash over you, and listen for the still small voice in the calm...