



34th Week in Ordinary Time: 21st /22nd November

Solemnity of Christ the King: Listen to Him

Reflection / Homily – Mgr Daniel McHugh

“All who are on the side of truth, listen to my voice.” (St John’s Gospel Ch18)

Many people have been taken aback at the allegations made by the cricketer Azeem Rafiq about Racism at Yorkshire Cricket Club. I must admit I wasn’t personally so surprised, though I was a bit shocked at the outburst last week of the person on the till at the store where I was shopping. It was to do with the high number of people coming across the Channel: and this person “assumed” I would agree that it was terrible and they should all be sent back; it was the venom that concerned me! There was no attempt to discriminate “refugees” from “asylum seekers”: everyone who was an economic migrant should be thrown out! I know it is a very difficult area of policy, whichever way you look at things, but it doesn’t fit at all with Catholic teaching.

I am interested in the coverage so far of the American Bishops Conference (15th-18th November) where Archbishop Gomez of Los Angeles, President of the Conference, and a Spanish American, said “the belief expressed in our (the U.S.) founding documents that all men and women are created equal and endowed with sacred dignity, and rights that must never be denied” is the “American Creed”. He said: “The Church’s Mission is the same in every time and place. It is to proclaim Jesus Christ and to help every person to find him and to walk with him.”

The Solemnity of Christ the King is one of our favorite Feasts as we come to the end of the Church’s Year and look forward to being one with Christ in Glory. The Gospel for Year B is from St John Chapter 18 where He answers Pilate: “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.” And, in answer to the question “who can expect to enter His Kingdom”, it is good to go back to Year A where the Gospel is from St Matthew Chapter 25. We remember it well. Jesus speaks of all nations assembling before him: “the King will say to all those on his right hand ‘come you who my Father has blessed, take for your heritage the kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you made me welcome; naked and you clothed me, sick and you visited me, in prison and you came to see me.’” Then in response to the question seeking to clarify when these things had happened, Jesus answered: “I tell you solemnly, in so far as you did this to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me.”

The challenge for us as we celebrate Christ the King is to take His truth to heart, and to live and share it with people in today’s world. Archbishop Gomez said “it remains for all members of the Church to act, and by acting, the challenges posed by injustice, poverty and other social ills can be overcome.” He turned to Pope Francis and the call in “Joy of

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the Gospel” in which the Pontiff “envisioned a missionary Church that can transform the world.”

This is very high sounding, but I believe it can be heard and acted on whatever sphere of life we are in. On Tuesday this week I received a message on the Internet from a friend abroad:

“Have a wonderful Tuesday.

Morning is God’s way of saying one more time, go make a difference, touch a heart, spread kindness, encourage a mind, inspire a soul and enjoy your day.”

I responded “a lovely thought to make the most of the day.”

I conclude with this lovely sentence from Pope Francis’ Letter “The Joy of the Gospel: only if our witness is joyful will we attract men and women to Christ”.

“Let it begin with me” as the hymn says!

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