



Jesus and Pontius Pilate, St Peter's Cathedral, Worms, Germany

Lord Jesus, Christ the King, all honour and glory belong to you. Help us to worship you as our Lord of majesty and truth. Hold us in the love and protection of your kingdom, where you live and reign in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Keeping Christ in Christmas

Part 3 – Christmas pudding

by Heather Cooke

This final Sunday of the Church year, before it all begins again with Advent, now glories in the title of Christ the King. Traditionally, though, it was known as “Stir-up Sunday”, from the opening words of the collect: “Stir up, O Lord, the wills of thy faithful people...”

Today we may hear those words as the post-communion prayer. On this day, people made their

Christmas puddings, often a family occasion where all the children had a stir and made a wish.

As we stir our puds, or maybe pop them in our shopping trolleys, we can keep the Christ in Christmas by thanking God for our families and friends as well as our food.

As we move towards another Christmas, may our wills be stirred up to serve him, Christ the King, who served others.

“This is our God, the servant King, who calls us now to follow him.” 🍷

A moment to decide

Katharine Smith *reflects on* John 18:33-37

Pilate, this is your moment. This is the moment that will define your life and give you a place in the minds of all who know the story of the man who stands before you. You could be the one who listens to his voice, who sees the truth of who he is and who stands firm in your refusal to allow innocence to be executed. You question him about his identity and where he comes from. As he talks about his kingdom do you not see the majesty and authority that radiate from him, even though he has already been humiliated and assaulted? You stand in judgement over a man of destiny from a world that is far removed from your world of power, oppression and cruelty. You could listen to his voice and know that you hear the truth. You could acknowledge his kingship and free him, a decision that would also free you in ways you cannot imagine.

Pilate, this is your moment, your decision. The tragedy is that we know the choice you are going to make.

We too have our moment. The moment when we stand before Christ the King and make a decision for ourselves about who he is to us. 🍷

Christ the King

by Julian Smith

The feast of Christ the King falls on the last Sunday of the Church's year. Luke's Gospel (23:33-43) tells of the death of Jesus, and offers us both warning and encouragement. “The child who has been born king of the Jews” (Matthew 2:2) reveals his kingship in his death on the cross.

We are warned not to over-sentimentalise Christmas, for which we begin our preparations on Advent Sunday, because the child in the manger is also the man upon the cross. Strangely, this is encouraging, as it is evidence of God's topsy-turvy kingdom on earth. While the world strives for fame, success and wealth, God measures things differently – “Many who are first will be last, and the last will be first” (Matthew 19:30).

You cannot get more “last” than a crucified, rejected man, yet God raised him up and we celebrate him today as Christ the King – encouragement indeed. 🍷

“Alone with none but thee, my God, I journey on my way. What need I fear when thou art near, O king of night and day?”

Saint Columba (521-597 AD), Irish abbot and missionary evangelist to Scotland