

Pentecost Last, Proper 29: Christ the King Sunday: Baptism Eden & Kai Chavez
 November 25, 2018
 Rev. Ken Wratten at St. Luke's
 Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14 Revelation 1:4b-8
 Psalm 93 John 18:33-37

Our having this Feast Day for celebrating Christ the King doesn't go back very far. It began in... 1925, instituted by pope Pius XI, following WW I. Mussolini had been the leader of Italy for three years; Hitler's Nazi party had been growing in popularity; and the world was in a great Depression: a depression that became even worse over the next fifteen years. It was in this time that the church chose to remind herself of Christ the King. This day is for celebrating the ultimate kingship of Jesus in our lives.

What kind of king is he?

In John 6:15, the people were so overcome by the teaching and actions of Jesus that they intended to come and force him to be their king. He rejected that, and Scripture says that he 'withdrew again to a mountain by himself.' This was not the kind of kingship he was sent to do.

The Revelation to John tells us about the end of this age – when a new era will come. The message from today's Revelation passage is that Jesus is given authority as “the ruler of the kings of the earth”. But Jesus brings a different kind of kingship from the one people expected, or the kind that some activists wanted; not about formal dinners with dignitaries.

In the Book of Daniel, the prophet describes a vision of heaven, where ‘one like a human being’ – whom we know was Jesus - was presented before God. He was given everlasting ‘dominion and glory and kingship’.

In John's Gospel, Pilate asked Jesus, “Are you the king of the Jews?” Jesus told Pilate that he was king, but king of a spiritual kingdom, not an earthly one. He said that he came into the world to testify to the truth. A spiritual kingdom – testifying to the truth.

This reign of truth is the offer that Jesus makes to us; the divine truth of love, servanthood, and hope.

His reign as our king anchors our hope on each of us being loved by God. It is a hope of turning away from limits being placed on what we can expect to accomplish in life, but knowing each of us has a God-given purpose. Examples: my being told in high school not to plan on college. But God had a purpose set for me. Syracuse-deans list. I eventually started my Master's Degree in Divinity in

1998, age 52- and was told by some that I was too old for meaningful ministry. But God had a purpose in place for me. July 1 last year marked 16 years.

What false claims have been made to you in your life; and what times has your life as a Christian shown you another truth, a stronger truth to live by? Living by that truth is to have Jesus reign in your life.

Do you make him your king?

Knowing about Jesus' message and purpose calls on us to make a choice – Jesus doesn't take reign as our king by force. Pilate could see that Jesus was not a king with an army; he was no military threat. But Pilate chose not to hear the offer of Jesus to deliver an absolute standard of truth. Pilate could only answer Jesus, "What is truth?" Our knowing Jesus' story much better than Pilate knew it, you and I are called to make a choice about Jesus' truth; his kingship in our lives.

On this Sunday of Christ the King, we have the priceless privilege to baptize two children into this life under the reign of God, with Christ as their King. In a few minutes we will welcome Eden and Kai Chavez into this family of faith; faith in the reign of Jesus – a promise of life based on the truth of his love, servanthood and hope.

Today the church worldwide remembers and celebrates the spiritual kingship of Jesus; not only in today's worship, but in our lives every day.

Accept the invitation for Jesus' divine truth to reign in your life.

Amen.