

2018 CHRIST THE KING

Some of the Marist Brothers who taught me were wonderful storytellers. I still remember as a 10 year old boy being enthralled as Brother Canute told the story of Marist Brothers in the 1930's being led to the firing squad in Mexico during a time of brutal persecution of the Church. They went with their heads held high and as the command "Ready- Aim- Fire was being called, shouted out together "Victory to Christ the King."

It was stirring stuff and as Brother Canute hastened to remind us- guaranteed the defeat of evil; and victory for the reign of Christ the King in Mexico.

Today is the feast of "Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe." We proclaim loudly today that Jesus, God's Word, King of all of the Angels and Saints is King of the Universe.

But Jesus wasn't a terribly successful King during His lifetime on Earth. He was only able to attract a few to follow Him. Most rejected Him. Even after His Resurrection, which proved beyond all doubt that He was God, most people wanted nothing at all to do with Him. For their God they wanted a powerful King who would make things right for them- not a King who wanted their love. They were not interested in a King who challenged their love of money, their delight in power and their pursuit of pleasure. They had no desire to forgive their enemies or to give help to the poor. They wanted a god who didn't challenge their vices. And so belief in Christ as God and King of the Universe was rejected and Christians were persecuted.

Today many people continue to persecute and kill those who believe in Christ and for much the same reasons.

It is estimated that last year alone at least 150,000 Christians were killed precisely because they were Christians in various countries throughout the world.

In our country while the persecution is not bloody, Christianity- especially Catholicism- is despised by the liberal elite.

Back in the 1600's, so-called 'Enlightenment' philosophers like Locke, Voltaire, Adam Smith, and Rousseau taught that truth was not to be found in God because God did not exist. Rather truth could only be found through the power of human reason. They had an indomitable confidence that human reason- if applied rigorously- would be able to

bring about a noble society. The ruling elites in Europe were profoundly influenced by the Enlightenment thinkers.

Four hundred years later- after the blood-baths generated by these so-called enlightened societies- the French Revolution, World War I and World War II, the Holocaust, the Russian genocides of Stalin, there emerged in the 1960's a new wave of thinkers who proclaimed their freedom not only from belief in God but also from enlightenment thinking. This is called 'post-modernism'.

The result is that in whole areas of modern society a significant number of people consider that *they* are the source of their own truth- not God, not Religion, not the reasoned laws of society. Every person decides what is true, what is good and what is evil for themselves, governed by how they feel about a certain situation. And no one has the right to say that they are wrong; their truth is as valid as anyone else's.

And this is where modern society runs into headlong conflict with the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church is judged to be the ultimate enemy of post-modernism because it dares to say that the basic postulates of post-modernism are utterly wrong. The Church states categorically that Truth is of God and comes from God's revelation of God's self in the Person of Jesus, the Son of God, in the Scriptures and the Traditions of the Church. Jesus is **the King of Truth- the Revealer of Truth.**

The Church stands against the right of people to create their own truth independently of God's Truth.

Consequently the Catholic Church is labelled as judgmental, elitist, and bigoted. And because it is not tolerant of the claim that all beliefs have equal validity, it is not given toleration itself.

At the centre of so many New Zealanders' psyche is the premise: "I am at the centre of the Universe. I only believe what I feel to be true."

At the centre of Catholicism is the premise: "We believe Christ to be the King of the Universe and His words to be the fullness of truth. Jesus is the ultimate witness to the truth."

And so we cannot give credence to any truth different from Christ's truth; "He is the beginning and the End, the One Who is, Who was, and Who is to come- the Almighty. He is God."

This is our base-line truth. And there can be no compromising on this. When we are mocked by the liberal elite who run both our country and the media, take courage from the example of those courageous Mexican

martyrs who knew that in the long term Christ our King would be victorious.

What a joy it is to belong to Christ and His Kingdom! What peace comes over us when our lives are ruled by His spirit and we know ourselves to be working for the coming about of His Kingdom- a kingdom of justice, of truth and of love. And so.... As we end this Year of Grace and look forward into a new Church Year, let us proclaim with faith:

“Victory to Christ our King”. *(Let’s say it together!!)*