



Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe

Pilate said to Jesus, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "Do you say this on your own or have others told you about me?" Pilate answered, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests handed you over to me. What have you done?" Jesus answered, "My kingdom does not belong to this world. If my kingdom did belong to this world, my attendants would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not here." So, Pilate said to him, "Then you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say I am a king. For this I was born and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice."

Introductory Prayer: Dear Jesus, I believe that you are truth itself; that you are the foundation of all moral judgments. I trust that you really care for me and give me the light to see the needs of others. I love you, Lord, and show it now with my desire to pray.

Petition: Make your truth my life, Lord!

1. Asking My Own Questions: Every day we form countless judgments. Often, they seem based more on what others have said, than on what we know. We are often told what to think by the media, government and even coworkers. Pilate was one of those whose judgment was based on what others had said. His question to Jesus was that of a

functionary; not of someone sincerely seeking the truth. Jesus sensed this weakness and confronted him. Pilate's excuse was that he was not Jewish, so how could he hope to understand? I will be judged one day on how I judged. How fair, how sincere and really how interested am I in others? Do I treat those in my life as though I really cared?

2. Jesus Stands above This World: Pilate's verbalized thoughts and the accusations of the Sanhedrin against Jesus come from this world. It is a world where people, once accused, are already judged; where most judgments remain hidden but still assassinate the person through actions and omissions; where "what others think of you" seems to matter most. Jesus does not belong to the ways of human respect. Nor can human respect even begin to judge him. He answers to God alone, just as he lives only to please his Father. Do I belong to this world? What kind of grip does this world have on me? How do its judgments affect my behavior?

3. Belonging to the Kingdom of Truth: What is relative can never judge what is absolute, just as changing seasons do not define human nature. Only a judgment from what is absolute can determine real values for all. Just before being elected Pope, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger exposed the world's imposition of subjective personal values, calling it a "a dictatorship of relativism that does not recognize anything as definitive and whose ultimate goal consists solely of one's own ego and desires" (Homily, April 18, 2005). In the same homily he juxtaposed this relativistic "truth" to friendship with Christ. Real friendship with Christ is our single guiding light, and it requires that we subject to him all other guides: our ego, our own feelings and our selfish desires. His ways, love and truth replace self-seeking. In which kingdom do I live?

Conversation with Christ: Lord Jesus, you are my king and your kingdom is truth. Form my mind to know all things in relation to you. Form my heart to judge all people in relation to your love. Free me from the deceptions of pride, human respect and self-love. May only your love reign in my heart!

Resolution: This week I will reject all internal judgments of others that are based on hearsay. I will replace them with prayers for those persons, giving them the benefit of the doubt and entrusting them to the care of the King.