



Wednesday Prayer

Christ the King Sunday – What kind of King?

When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. Then Jesus said, “Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.” And they cast lots to divide his clothing.

Then [one of the criminals] said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” He replied, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.”

Luke 23:33-34, 42-43

What kind of king forgives even while being persecuted? The Roman soldiers mocked Jesus and called out to him to “Save yourself!” thinking if he truly was who his believers said, he would have the power to save himself from this horrible death. Yet Jesus knew God’s plan and he chose to call out to God – not to save himself but to save all those who carried out his persecution.

What kind of king would we have expected had we lived in that time? Maybe we only need to think of what we’ve expected from leaders throughout our history to answer that question. Just coming out of this election cycle (actually, not even out of it yet), we can think of how far off our society’s expectations are of leaders compared with the leadership of Jesus. How we value power and control and how that can be used against people in so many ways instead of for the good of all, especially the most vulnerable among us.

In commentary about this text by Dean and Professor Debra J. Mumford, she says, “The kingdom of God for Jesus was a world where those on the bottom of society in His day would find liberation from the systems and structures that bind them.” Our systems and structures have operated to benefit the powerful for generations, leaving children, youth and others who are marginalized vulnerable to exploitation. Jesus’ mission was to have us see another way. He was a King for all, forgiving us even as we get caught up in the unjust ways of power and control. And, by his example, we may live into a new way of being.

Jesus, humble king, you forgive us all, even when we feel unforgivable. You have shown us how your kingdom exists to care for those most in need. Give us the strength to lead as you have shown. Amen.

Written by Joy McElroy, Cherish All Children Executive Director and team member of LSS Metro Homeless Youth Services.

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