

READING I *Daniel 7:13-14*

As the visions during the night continued, I saw
one like a son of man coming,
on the clouds of heaven;
when he reached the Ancient One
and was presented before him,
the one like a Son of man received dominion,
glory, and kingship;
all peoples, nations,
and languages serve him.
His dominion is an everlasting dominion
that shall not be taken away,
his kingship shall not be destroyed.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 93:1, 1-2, 5 (1a)

R. The Lord is king; he is robed in majesty.

The LORD is king, in splendor robed;
robed is the LORD and girt about with
strength. R.

And he has made the world firm,
not to be moved.

Your throne stands firm from of old;
from everlasting you are, O LORD. R.

Your decrees are worthy of trust indeed;
holiness befits your house,
O LORD, for length of days. R.

READING II *Revelation 1:5-8*

Jesus Christ is the faithful witness, the firstborn
of the dead and ruler of the kings of the earth. To
him who loves us and has freed us from our sins
by his blood, who has made us into a kingdom,
priests for his God and Father, to him be glory and
power forever and ever. Amen.

Behold, he is coming amid the clouds,
and every eye will see him,
even those who pierced him.
All the peoples of the earth will lament him.
Yes. Amen.

"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the
Lord God, "the one who is and who was and who
is to come, the almighty."

GOSPEL *John 18:33b-37*

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. Every-
one who belongs to the truth listens to my voice."

Practice of Hope

Today we celebrate the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, the last Sunday of our liturgical year. There is much we can continue to learn about who Jesus is and thus who we are called to become, as we hear him testify to the truth even in the face of being handed over to Pilate for torturous persecution. ♦ Jesus reminds Pilate that the kingdom is not yet here. How can you work to continue to bring forth the kingdom on earth today? What is an action you can take this week to proclaim the truth you have learned from Jesus? ♦ Let us reflect on how we have journeyed with our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, throughout this past liturgical year. How have you pierced Jesus? How have you actively seen him in your daily life? How have you brought the humble, service-oriented truth Jesus proclaims to those around you? Bring these reflections to your prayer.

Download more questions and activities for families, initiation groups, and other adult groups at <http://www.ltp.org/ahw>.

Scripture Insights

The apocalyptic vision presented in Daniel 7 is the foundation for Jesus' Gospel claims to be the Son of Man. Daniel is characterized, through the court tales of Daniel 1–6, as a faithful sage through whom God reveals Godself. In Daniel 7, he begins to receive God's plan for humankind, including seeing "one like a son of man" (Daniel 7:13). In contemporary Jewish idiom, this refers to a human being. Daniel sees one such person in relation to God, presented as the Ancient One, whose kingship is eternal. Jesus takes this on as a title to represent his self-understanding in relationship to God and he is the Christ, God's anointed one.

John's Gospel presents Pilate interrogating Jesus on the charges at stake for the Roman Empire: kingship and sedition. The heart of the Roman trial is the question of truth. Kingship in the political sense is Pilate's only concern. Jesus parries and prods Pilate to take a stand. Speaking of his kingdom, and strongly so, Jesus declares his kingship beyond that of Pilate or any political system. Not of the world, it is nonetheless witnessed in the world. Pilate pursues the question and indeed Pilate will say four times in the coming scenes that Jesus is king (John 18:39; 19:14, 15, 19). Jesus modifies the title and lays bare the real issue at stake: truth. All accusations come down to this. Jesus, however, continues to fulfill his mission, bearing witness to the truth even on trial.

♦ Are you familiar with Daniel 7? Have you understood its significance for the Gospels? How does this impact you?

♦ Pilate's dismissal of the knowledge of truth while standing before its embodiment influences the rest of Jesus' story. Authentic believing in Jesus is based on openness to his word as the revelation of God. This is Jesus' final challenge and Pilate refuses to recognize God's revelation in him, but nonetheless seeks neutrality by acting as if Jesus' challenge has nothing to do with him. Can this attempt at neutrality stand?

♦ How do these readings call the faithful to stand for truth in their everyday lives?