

SOLEMNITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, KING OF THE UNIVERSE “B”
NOVEMBER 24/25, 2018

A prominent attorney a few months ago in an interview on a Sunday morning news program stated: “Truth isn’t truth. It’s somebody’s version of it.”

This weekend’s Gospel brings us into the scene between Jesus’s trial before Pilate. Of course, we know how it will end, ultimately with the crucifixion and the antagonizing sign of Jesus’s “crime” Pilate orders placed on the cross proclaiming him “King.” But here in the midst of today’s Gospel conversation between the two we hear eternal questions that cause us to consider, “What is truth?” Jesus makes a straightforward claim, that he is king, and has been sent to testify to the truth. Pilate, vested with political authority, including the power to inflict the death penalty, is wrapped up in an argument over the definition of the nature of truth not unlike many today. Pilate doesn’t see the Incarnation, the advent into world history in human flesh by God through his Son Jesus, the King of Kings, standing before his eyes. Truth for Pilate is Emperor Caesar’s version of it. And in Pilate’s blindness, he will put Jesus to death as a would be throne usurper as the King of the Jews.

This weekend’s celebration of Jesus Christ, King of the Universe which concludes this year’s annual liturgical cycle of seasons and feasts demands each of us answer for her or himself the question: “What is truth?” Is it Jesus and his Kingdom? Or is it, like the attorney opined: “Somebody’s version of it” which we arbitrarily choose from a variety of choices, much like a series of potential answers on a multiple choice test, or even something I personally create for myself; my version of it. How we answer this fundamental question determines the attitudes and values by which we live and the actions that flow from them.

A great danger today both in society and in the Church is *relativism*. Relativism holds that there is no universal objective truth, rather each point of view has its own truth. We see relativism expressed in such statements as “You have your truth and I have mine.” All truth, as one defines truth, is equal. Relativism leads to a false sense of tolerance in which all views and every kind of behavior is acceptable as long as “no one gets hurt.” The explosion of social media through which a multitude of “truths” are proposed has led to much confusion and even

hostility toward Jesus, the Gospel and the teaching authority of the Church in regard to “eternal truth.”

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI on the eve of his election as pope issued a warning about the temptation of relativism facing the Church and all of us as individual believers. Then Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger stated: *Having a clear Faith, based on the Creed of the Church, is often labeled today as a fundamentalism. Whereas, relativism, which is letting oneself be tossed and “swept along by every wind of teaching”, looks like the only attitude acceptable to today’s standards. We are moving toward a dictatorship of relativism which does not recognize anything as certain and which has as its highest goal one’s own ego and one’s own desires. However, we have a different goal: the Son of God, true man. He is the measure of true humanism. Being an “Adult” means having a faith which does not follow the waves of today’s fashions or the latest novelties. A faith that is deeply rooted in friendship with Christ is adult and mature. It is this friendship which opens us up to all that is good and gives us the knowledge to judge the true from false and deceit from truth.*

As Jesus stated to Pilate, so he invites and challenges us: ***I came into this world to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.***