What Kind of King Is Jesus to us?

This Sunday before Advent is celebrated as the Feast of Christ the King, and was established by Pope Pius XI in 1925. It's always seemed to me a bit odd that the readings for the Festival include passages in the Bible relating to the trial of our Lord by Pilate - especially as we're approaching Advent - a quiet time for reflection that precedes the happy celebration of the birth of The Saviour-King!

I guess it's all-too-easy to get wrapped up in the busy-ness and joyfulness of the Christmas season, and thereby to, unintentionally, diminish the importance of, the 'whole story' of Easter'. The Gospel reading serves as a stark reminder of the price paid by Jesus, who was mocked by Pilate as "a king", prior t His execution.

Pilate uses the word King several times:

- asking repeatedly "Are you the **king** of the Jews?"
    - Jesus didn't respond , beyond "You say so"…
- then Pilate presents Jesus to the crowd and declares, "Here is your **King**!"
- And the crowd shouted repeatedly "Crucify him!… We have **no king** but Caesar!".
- and finally, Jesus is crucified under the inscription, "King of the Jews"…

Thought for the Week: As we celebrate the last Sunday of the Christian Calendar - in the context of "Christ the King" - we should remember what Jesus finally said in response to Pilate. He neither denied nor verified the title of King - He simply stated: "My kingdom is not from this world."

I'll be writing a few thoughts about God's Kingdom during Advent

In truth, our familiarity with the Gospels accounts, and 'what comes next", makes it easy for us now, with hindsight, to confess Jesus as "King" - not a mighty warrior, but in every way a humble, servant-king, whose only weapon was an unrelenting and uncompromising way of life that offers unconditional love in all circumstances.

The challenge, I think, is that we can so easily be pulled in two directions at the same time - by trying to live our lives doing the right

thing by Jesus, whilst living our lives in a society that might seem to ‘demand’ the opposite.

Jesus never went the way of the crowd - neither should we…

Hebrews 12;1 (ESV):

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,