

## **HOMILY HIGHLIGHT:**

**COUNTDOWN!** - In today's passage, we shift from the Gospel of Mark to the Gospel of John, and we hear about one more quality to cultivate --- a spirit of dedicated commitment to Jesus!

In this scene of Jesus' trial, there are 2 "king questions" that Pilate asks Jesus: "Are you the king of the Jews?" and "Then you are a king?" But, embedded in those questions is a not-so-implicit implied statement: "You are not my king!" Pilate's loyalty and fidelity and commitment is to the Roman Emperor, Caesar --- and to the voices that he listens to in the crowd that he wanted to keep control and power over! Really, Pilate's ultimate commitment, loyalty, fidelity – is to himself!

But Jesus' loyalty, fidelity and commitment is to the Father and to what is true – he is not interested in fighting over titles or playing power-games. Even though Pilate looks like he was in the "power position" over Jesus – it only seems that way!

Jesus is not at all afraid of Pilate – and he is really free internally to follow the Father's call! And, he clearly had the ability to influence others to follow his example – and that was making Pilate nervous!! They did not have to be afraid of Pilate either!

This spiritual "kingship" idea is really not so much about a form of government but a quality of relationship --- to whom is my commitment, loyalty, fidelity, allegiance really given? To whose voice do I really listen? Is it the voice of culture or the voice of a spiritual community of faith!

And, just what does this kingdom look like? We will pray about that in the Preface to the Eucharistic Prayer: "... a kingdom of truth and life (not dishonesty and disregard for life), a kingdom of holiness and grace (not status, power or force), a kingdom of justice, love and peace... (not oppression, competition, fear)"!

And what this means for us is this: "How committed, loyal, dedicated am I really to living the values of Jesus's realm --- redefining power, greatness and learning from him how to be truly free to love and to serve!"