**The Rt Revd Dr Eleanor Sanderson, Bishop of Hull, reflects on John 18.33-37 for the Feast of Christ the King, Sunday 24th November.**

Christ the King Sunday ends the church year, before we begin the season of Advent. And in this Kingdom season, we end our journey as a people of God, as God's family, affirming and asserting his kingly authority in our lives and in our world. And in the gospel that we have today, from John's Gospel, we are reminded very clearly that the kingdom of God, the kingdom of Christ our King, does not look like the kingdoms around us in this world.

And when we seek to learn to live into this kingdom, we have to learn that a different way from the way that we might experience kingdoms and authority in nations around us. “My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here.”

As we make this pivot from the Kingdom season into advent, I thought that of all years, this year in particular feels important to make this pivot in peace and in confidence. Our national church is inviting us in Advent to notice and to be present to the calm and bright. Those words from one of our carols that are going to shape the invitations of advent offered by our national church this year, calm and bright. And I think that is a beautiful invitation to hold on to in relation to today and Christ as our King. That as we reflect on the earthly reality around us and the kingdoms and the nations that are in uproar that surround us, and our own griefs and our own fallibility within our human brokenness, we are reminded that Christ, our King, is fully human and fully divine, and therefore we are able to trust him, that he who is without sin has made us righteous by his grace, and not by a righteousness that we can work of our own. But he is the gift of God.

And so my invitation to us in this week in particular, is to take space. To take space to ready ourselves for the Advent journey that will soon be upon us, and to take a particular time to make that journey from the Kingdom season to the Advent season, the Advent season when we call out in longing, but the kingdom season that ends in confidence, because that is the link to that which is calm and bright. The peace that Jesus gives to us is a peace that is not of this world, as his kingdom is not of this world.

And so, in this week, I invite you to take time in a sacred place to go into our church buildings, your local parish, to sit quietly, to dwell in that sacred space, and to remember the authority that Christ has, and who he is, what he is like, all that we learn about him in his life, in his death, in his resurrection and ascension; his humility, his gentleness, his kindness and his holiness, to dwell on the character and the person who is our King. And from that dwelling to find that calm and bright space. Because as we shift into Advent, we cry out in hope. But let us anchor that hope first in confidence.

So that is my prayer for us this week, that we remember the character of our King, but also the character of our kingdom, that it is not of this world. But yet we as a people will work together in partnership with our King for his Kingdom to come on earth as it is in heaven. And that comes from a place of calmness, of confidence, and bright hope. Amen.