

ANGELUS: JESUS IS KING AT THE MOMENT OF HIS CRUCIFIXION

VATICAN CITY, 21 NOV 2010 (VIS) -

At the end of today's Eucharistic concelebration with the new cardinals created in yesterday's consistory, the Holy Father appeared at the window of his study to pray the Angelus with faithful gathered in St. Peter's Square.

In his remarks the Pope spoke of today's Solemnity of Christ the King, noting how it was established by Pope Pius XI in 1925 and later, following Vatican Council II, placed in its current position at the end of the liturgical year.

"The Gospel of St. Luke", said Pope Benedict, "presents the regality of Jesus at the moment of the crucifixion. The leaders of the people and the soldiers deride 'the firstborn of all creation' and put Him to the test to see if He has the power to save Himself from death. Yet it is precisely on the cross that Jesus is 'at the height' of God, Who is Love. There He can be recognised".

"In fact, while the Lord seems indistinguishable between two criminals, one of them, aware of his sins, ... turns to the 'king of the Jews' saying 'Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom'. ... The so-called 'good thief' immediately receives forgiveness and the joy of entering the Kingdom of heaven. ... Jesus, from His throne of the cross, welcomes all men with infinite mercy".

"The path of love, which the Lord reveals to us and invites us to follow, may also be seen in Christian art. Indeed from earliest times, 'in the arrangement of Christian sacred buildings, ... it became customary to depict the Lord returning as a king - the symbol of hope - ... while the west wall normally portrayed the Last Judgement as a symbol of our responsibility for our lives": hope in the infinite love of God and commitment to ordering our lives in accordance with the love of God", the Pope explained.

"When we contemplate the depictions of Jesus inspired by the New Testament", he concluded, "we are, as the Council of Trent taught, led 'to understand ... the sublime nature of the humiliation of the Word of God, and ... to remember His life in the flesh, His salvific passion and death, and the redemption of the world which arises therefrom".

