

Good Friday 2021 2.04.21

So that's it; a young man has been arrested for insurrection and some obscure religious crimes, tried and condemned to death by a court that has already made up its mind. All carried out with indecent haste. It has happened time and time again over the ages. We still hear of similar things in places ruled by tyrannical governments. But of course this case is different; this is the Son of God. God created the heavens and the world and all that is in it and he created humankind to care for it and to follow him. But that did not happen. They were disobedient and exploited the earth instead of caring for it. They exploited and killed their fellow human beings and they refused to love God and each other; they practiced hatred and greed.

So God realises that something more radical is needed. He sends his Son Jesus, so in Him God becomes human; becomes one of them. Jesus

comes and lives a life of goodness, a life of love. He teaches people to love one another, to care for one another. He challenges those powers of evil that have stopped people turning to God. So what do they do? They arrest him and have him put to death. From this moment the world was changed forever. On the first Good Friday He lives human life to its end, to death. He puts himself in the hands of his children and they do that to him. They nail him to a cross to die for nothing more than showing love to the world. On this day God proves for ever his undying love and commitment to the world, to us, humanity. He experienced the end that we will all have to experience, death. God, through Jesus, has experienced the life – and death- that every human being experiences.

On this most solemn day we mourn the death of Jesus, the Son of God- cruelly put to death by humankind. We acknowledge the wrong in the world that led to that happening and to many others dying

over the ages. We go away from here today remembering how the disciples must have felt. Jesus is dead and it seems that all he promised has died with him; it feels like the end!

But we have the benefit of 2000 years of hindsight. We know it is not the end, we know that there is a great light ahead of us, that hope and joy will come alive for us on the third day. In this terrible death the seeds of hope are sown.

As we go forward from today we have had what in many ways is the most difficult year ever for many people. COVID has wrought havoc all over the world, with millions dying from it and many having their lives severely restricted and changed by it. Many have lost loved ones. Many are suffering from the long term effects of the virus and of course many are suffering mental health problems caused by isolation and lockdowns. But there is now hope; hope brought by vaccines, by lowering infections and death numbers, by easing restrictions. As we

wait with bated breath for the miracle of Easter and the hope that brings, so we wait with hope for the future of our lives, sure in the knowledge that Jesus walks with us through our suffering and sure of God's love for us that was shown on that cross. The love that was so great that through His death on the cross, death lost its sting!

AMEN