

GOOD FRIDAY – 10 April 2009

Lord Jesus Christ, the story of your passion is written on our hearts. Amen.

Christ has died.

However, we know the whole story, we are only here today because of the resurrection. But equally, we only get to the resurrection because of today.

Christ has died.

The power of the Cross is the presence of God in the depths of the human experience of suffering, of betrayal, of senseless acts of violence, of death.

This is the experience of those gathered around the cross. It is our experience. It is the experience of those for whom life has no meaning, no value, no hope. It is the experience of God in Jesus.

For many people the helplessness, the frustration and the foolishness of the Good Friday Cross are too much and they prefer either to avoid it altogether or to bypass it and jump straight to Easter.

This may also be the symptom of a society which does its uttermost to sanitise, avoid, hide, and deny the reality of death. It may also depend on where we are in the story and where we are in our own story.

In Christ on the Cross, God enters into the completeness of our experience, God suffers with us. Christ dies for us.

No matter how much we may turn the cross into a beautiful article of decoration and devotion, we can never escape the ugliness, the cruelty, the pain and the folly of what it symbolises: crucified divinity, crucified humanity.

So God loved the world.

The story of Good Friday, the story of God in Christ, is also the story of Judas, and of Simon Peter, of Pontius Pilate, and of the religious authorities.

It's the story of Mary the Mother of Jesus and of the beloved Disciple, of Mary Magdalene and the other faithful women who remained with them. It's the story of those who nailed Jesus to cross and cast lots for his clothing. It's the story of Joseph of Arimathea.

It's the story of those who have suffered through the bushfires, and of those who are suffering through Italian earthquake. It's the story of all those who care and of those who couldn't care less. It's our story. It's the story of sin and forgiveness, of passion and resurrection, of divine love in a human heart.

Jesus said: "I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself."

Lord Jesus Christ, the story of your passion is written on our hearts, and in your cross all of our stories intersect.

This is the ultimate foolishness of God.

This is the supreme act of subversion.

Divine love, nailed to a tree.

Christ has died.