



Good Friday

10 April 2020

Symbol The **CROSS** draped with a black cloth

Hymn 349 *In the cross of Christ I glory,
towering o'er the wrecks of time;
all the light of sacred story
gathers round its head sublime*

Litany In humble awe and trembling faith we ask Your presence with us, Lord Jesus Christ, as who we are and what our world is like intersects with the terrible reality of the day your world sought your destruction in death, death on a Cross. Our present reality is yet another to add to all the wrecks of humanity's story which are nevertheless lifted up in your wounded and discarded body. And so, on this day of all days, as we look upon the Cross we see again sacred story's great affirmation that humankind continues to matter in death as in life because of the ultimate commitment of the one man whom God chose to become; for nothing can separate us from the love of God, nothing in all Creation.

Thanks be for Christ on the Cross.

*When the woes of life o'ertake us,
hopes deceive and fears annoy,*

*never shall the Cross forsake us,
from it shines our peace and joy*

Prayer

We thank You, loving God, that through word and sacrament You have given us Your Son; the true bread of heaven, food of eternal life. Because, in Him, You are with us we will go on in our troubled time with its problems and its possibilities with new assurance; and, empowered by His Resurrection life, we will serve one another and the world in which we share to Your honour and glory now and forever.

Amen

Hymn 339 *O sacred head sore wounded,
with grief and pain weighed down;
O kingly head surrounded
with thorns your only crown;
death's shadows rise before you,
the glow of life decays;
yet hosts of heaven adore you
and tremble as they gaze.
In this your bitter Passion,
good Shepherd, think of me,
look on me with compassion*

***unworthy though I be:
beneath your Cross abiding
for ever would I rest
in your dear love confiding,
and with your presence blessed.***

John 19:15

They cried out, "Away with him, away with him, crucify him!"

John 19:30

When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished," and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Litany

Were you there? Applauding one moment, but then shouting, "Crucify him, crucify him!

"We were there. We were there".

Were you there? Using your power over one at a disadvantage, unwilling to listen to your heart and conscience, reluctant to let a good man go free.

"We were there. We were there".

Were you there? Hammering in the nails, just doing your job, trying to isolate your feelings from your work, blocking out your own lack of integrity?

"We were there. We were there".

Were you there? Looking up and seeing someone you love suffer, but unable to help, wishing fervently that you had told this dear one that you loved him; recognising his worth, yet not confident enough to declare it.

"We were there. We were there".

We were not involved in the actual crucifixion of the man whom God had chosen to become but we are involved in our countless times of avoiding the issue, acting with hostility, judging unfairly, closing our eyes to the hurting ones, failing to stay the course when an easy way opens to us.

"We were there. We were there".

Crucifixion was man's last word; but it was not God's! It is *not* finished, thanks be to God!

Hymn 345

Were you there when he rose from out the tomb?

Were you there when he rose from out the tomb?

***O sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble,
tremble;***

were you there when he rose from out the tomb?

Closing Reflection

I find myself turning again to the words of St. Paul to the Corinthian Church.

For the word of the Cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles,

1 Cor. 1:18,22-23

As we wrestle with faith in a time of crisis and the realisation that the confidence of our time in its superiority through science and learning has been shaken to the core by a rampant *virus* which all our sophistication has failed to manage other than by closing down society we surely see in the events of 2000 years ago a reminder that our world and our place in it is in the hands of GOD. We are still creatures whose power over creation remains at the behest of GOD. When GOD chose to be present in Jesus and to accept humankind's response to that presence whatever the consequences a line was drawn in the sands of time for ever; not just for an earlier point in

the evolutionary story of human experience. The Cross continues to be the ultimate symbol of the will of GOD for GOD's world and that will never change. The way of faith as the way to life in all its fullness remains humanity's true calling but a *virus* is challenging this generation to recognise this and to reshape its patterns of living accordingly; just as surely as the outcomes of climate change will not allow us to ignore the consequences of disrespecting the fragility of this planet that is our home if humanity is to have a future.

Lord God, we offer ourselves once again to one another, asking that we may truly serve and grow together in Your love.

We offer the gifts of flesh and spirit that the Church in this place may play its part as the Church in this troubled and conflicted world; through Jesus Christ our crucified redeeming Lord.

Amen

Benediction

*Yes, the blessing of God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit
be yours today and every day.
Amen*

Response

Turn your eyes upon Jesus
Look full in His wonderful face,
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim
In the light of His glory and grace.

Rev Graeme Kerr