

Good Friday

In Jerusalem, there is something called the Via Dolorosa which means the “way of suffering”. The Via Dolorosa marks out the journey that Jesus took from Pilate’s citadel to Golgotha. We remember the Via Dolorosa as the “stations of the cross”.

Today the Via Dolorosa is a tourist attraction. It winds past schools, apartments, stores and restaurants and Churches. It seems far removed from the scenes depicted in the Stations of the Cross on our Walls today. Yet, Jesus’ Passion took place in the midst of apartments, stores, restaurants and the Temple. He was dragged through the streets in front of people going to and from work, having a meal or children playing in the streets...just another criminal being led to his death.

Crowds probably followed him to see what was going to happen. There were probably people shouting for and against him. There were probably people who saw this spectacle and turned away...not wanting to get involved. This is a scene that has been repeated over the centuries in many countries. A condemned person led to his death with

curious people watching...some opposed to the sentence and some happy with it...some drawn to it and some wanting to avoid it. But this particular execution had meaning beyond what could be seen with the naked eye.

In this particular execution, the fate of the entire human race: past, present and future hung in the balance, and very few realized it.

Jesus died for our sins...an acceptable sacrifice to God.

You may wonder why God required such a sacrifice. Isn't God all merciful? Yes, but God is also all-justice. Justice requires punishment for an offence and the offence of the sins and selfishness of all human kind requires a high price.

But to many at that time, this was a simple execution, because (as Jesus would say) we see, but do not see. The world isn't just what our five senses tell us it is. The world also has a spiritual element. The spiritual world is not separate from the physical world. The two are intertwined and everything that happens in the physical world has spiritual consequences and everything that happens in the spiritual world has physical consequences.

I believe that if I sin today, it is not just my action and its physical consequence that I have to deal with, but that I have created an equal reaction in the spiritual realm. It is as if I had let a little bit of poison into the atmosphere and it makes everyone else a little bit sicker.

All of our actions have consequences.

Nothing we do is in a vacuum.

We are all linked in a spiritual and physical ecosystem. People say these days that you need to think a little “green” for our environment. I would like to add that we also need to think a little “grace” and “mercy”.

Tonight let us join Jesus’ journey through his agony and death. In his tomb, let our own sins and selfishness be buried as well. So, when he rises from the dead, so our soul will rise gloriously triumphant...purified and made clean...an acceptable sacrifice to our God.