

A Grey Day
A meditation for Good Friday, 2020
St Paul's Presbyterian Church, Napier



On this day we gather to remember Jesus our Savior
who loved us and gave himself for us.
Let us draw near in full assurance of God's endless love and
mercy.

***We give our thanks and praise to Jesus Christ
who carries our sorrows,
heals our wounds,
and redeems us from sin and death.***

Hymn: My song is love unknown

Reading: Matthew 27:11-37 *you might like to read more of Matthew's passion story during the day.*

Hymn: Ah Holy Jesus, how hast thou offended

Reflection

Today is one of the grey areas of the Christian year:
a day when the lights are dimmed
and the sky feels overcast even if it isn't:
a day when theologians and poets
feel as if a heavy veil is drawn over heart and mind.
An inexplicably sad day.

We resist the grey areas,
prefer to see everything in black and white,
look for cloudless, sunny skies,
try not to read between the lines;
throw in a bright colour or two
to try and enliven the scene.

In the grey light of early morning -
after a night in the ecclesiastical high court,
and denial by one of his own circle -
Jesus found himself at the gates
of the reluctant Pilate, who promptly
tried to hand him back to the Jews.

And though the sun rose that morning,
the whole world turned grey for One
who found himself without friend or helper,
faced with drinking a cup he'd prayed
would be turned away from him,
knowing that life was about to be drained out of him.

We are invited to accompany Jesus through this grey day:
to be witnesses to his suffering,
to keep silence before his cry of dereliction.
In our imaginations, let us trudge through Jerusalem,
until we come to the place of the Cross:
and then, let us not turn our faces away.

In this grey day lie all the sorrows and failings
of a humanity that strives for high success,
yet comes up against human limitations,
and falls to the ground in despair.
A humanity whose peace plans
give way to guns, and whose political promises
become papers in filing cabinets.

Here is a day marked by the brokenness of the world.
But it is not a day to wallow in misery,
or to indulge in morbid thoughts about the crucifixion.
It is simply a somber, dignified day
when we remember how it was for Jesus,
and find at the foot of the cross
a place to lay down ours and the world's sorrow.

On grey days it is hard to see clearly,
difficult to understand things that aren't clear.
Yet all we are asked to do today is to be present
to the sacred story as it is retold, and
to the inexplicable, mysterious, wondrous
transaction that was, and still is taking place.

~ written by Ann Siddall, and posted on the website of the
Stillpoint Spirituality Centre. <http://www.stillpointsa.org.au/>

Prayer

O God,
all our sin, all our hatred, all our violence,
all our apathy, all our convenient neglect,
came together in that dark hour
when they snuffed out the light of your goodness,
when they crucified your Son, our Lord.
And we come to remember.

O God,
all your love, all your compassion,
all your goodness, all your forgiveness,
came together in that life and that dying,
your undying and unending love,
when they crucified you Son, our Lord.
And we remember.

O God,
all of his story, all of human history,
all our story, repeats itself
where hate meets love, where injustice meets justice,
where despair meets hope, death meets life,
and we dare to believe we were there
when they crucified your Son, our Lord
and that this is none other than the way also to truth and life.
And we remember. Amen

Hymn: Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

*We leave this meditative space to journey with Jesus,
walking alongside him, carrying the cross.*

