

Christ Church Freemantle

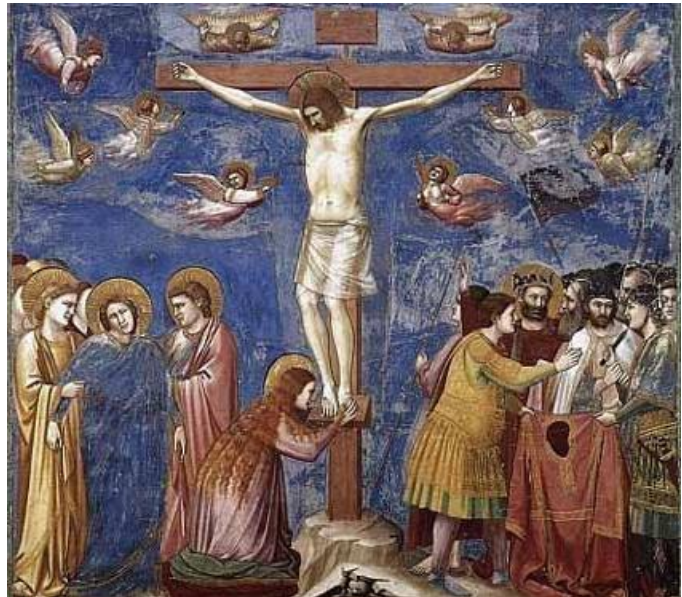
Friday 2nd April – Good Friday

Perhaps like me and others reading this, the significance of Good Friday has gradually unfolded as we mature in our Christian Faith. It was during my confirmation preparation classes that the 'significance' of Good Friday started to be particularly meaningful - a continuing process....

Christians, as well as a fair number of others, know the narrative of Good Friday:

Matthew Chp: 27 - Judas' betrayal of Jesus in return for 30 pieces of silver; how on being persuaded by the chief priests and elders, the multitude asked for the release of Barabbas a notorious prisoner over Jesus, calling for Jesus to be crucified; Pontius Pilate washing his hands before the multitude, saying he was innocent of the blood of Jesus before handing Jesus over.

The soldiers took Jesus away, first stripped him before putting a scarlet robe on Him. Placing a twisted crown of thorns on His head they proceeded to mock Him saying 'Hail King of the Jews'. Jesus was then led away to be crucified. What a turn of events! Was it not a few days previously on Palm Sunday that Jesus had ridden into Jerusalem on a borrowed donkey as He was acclaimed by the crowds who covered His way with palm branches and their coats?



Jesus willingly suffered and died by crucifixion as the ultimate sacrifice for our sins. As we read in Matthew Chp 27 v 45 and 46 - from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over the land. About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me".

On Good Friday we reflect on the life of Christ: His works, teachings and ways; the miracles He performed; His painful journey to Golgotha; and His crucifixion. We remember the day Jesus died on the cross for our sins.

Some communities honour Good Friday by dressing in mourning attire and keeping a night-long vigil in Church - having a 'wake' - just as they do the night before one of their own is buried. At a wake, the dead person's greatest life achievements might be narrated. Could this be what 'the Centurion' did as he and others were keeping watch over Jesus? For when Jesus cried out as He was dying, and the curtain of the temple tore in two from top to bottom, the ground shook, and there was an earthquake, the Centurion said 'Truly He was the Son of God!' – Matthew Chp 27 v 54. Jesus' death on that Friday gave us the assurance of sins forgiven.

Perhaps on waking on Holy Saturday we could embrace the fresh start given to us. Let us pray that we embrace opportunities to better relationships with our families, loved ones, neighbours, work colleagues etc.... *AND could we also be gentle with ourselves?* – as we acknowledge our weaknesses, forgive ourselves for past wrongs, let go our historical failures and regrets; with the unfolding season of Spring we too could confidently welcome fresh starts.

Esther Burke