

PICTURES OF THE WEEK

4th April 2020

The Revd Erna Stevenson



Crosses

I took this photo from my first floor study window during Lent. The day was nearly over and darkness was falling. The roof of my neighbour's house and the budding cherry blossoms in my garden were nothing but black outlines. There was just enough light from the setting sun to illuminate one corner of the sky. And in that last flourish of the dying day an amazing cross became visible. That's when I reached for my camera. It was a beautiful sight and I had to capture the magic of the moment.

But then reality kicked in. An everyday sight, I told myself. It is nothing more than two planes' condensation trails crossing each other, which

happens all the time in the vicinity of Heathrow Airport. Yes, but this means the beauty of the sight has more meaning than first appears. It hides the fact that this cross is made up of hot exhaust gases (including carbon dioxide) produced by the engines of planes contributing to the manmade greenhouse gases that cause global warming. Sign of what we are doing to our Planet.

As I look at it, my thoughts wander to that other Cross on Calvary, beautiful representations of which can be seen in gold and silver and marble and polished wood everywhere. And I am reminded of the crude reality behind it, the tortured, suffering body hanging on it breathing his last breath, yet blessing his murderers, forgiving all the cruelty done to him. For us this Cross is the sign of wonder, which overshadows all the crosses of our guilt, of our fears, of our anxieties, of our mourning. This one doesn't just disappear in the sky like the one in my photo, or the cheers of the Palm Sunday crowds outside Jerusalem. This one has healing powers; it leads to the surprise of the empty tomb, the miracle of the greatest Love there is, which is stronger than death and is with us every moment of every day spurring us to forgiveness and loving kindness towards each other and towards our long-suffering Planet.

Erna Stevenson

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Liz Waumsley



Two pictures that have been in the corridor in the past.



The first one is Saturday Night Deposition by Graham Brant. I offer it as a suggestion because Graham translates the crucifixion into a sadly familiar modern scene. The young people are the worse for wear on a Saturday night. The shape of the outstretched arms of the woman in red suggest a crucifixion. But who is being crucified and who is the loving saviour? I like this painting because of the love and patience in the faces of the paramedics, rescuing the young man from the consequences of his foolishness without

judging. We all have cause to admire those who work in the NHS right now. We thank God for them, and pray that they will be kept safe.



The second one is a favourite. Peter and John running to the sepulchre on the morning of the resurrection. Eugene Burnand.