

## Good Friday Reflection 10 April 2020

Mark 15:21-39

Pilot has had Jesus flogged, a cruel and harsh beating, and passed Jesus to the soldiers to be crucified. Simon of Cyrene is passing, and he is pressed into carrying Jesus' cross. As Jesus arrives at Golgotha, he is offered wine mixed with myrrh. This drink was a mild analgesic which may well be seen as a last act of kindness to dull the pain of crucifixion, probably given by a group of local ladies. Jesus declined. Jesus' pain could not be diluted. If mine and your sin, is to be lifted from our shoulders, the full cost has to be paid, there can be no part payment, short cuts or lessening of the price. Christ has to suffer the full force of the consequences of our sin. Jesus did so obediently, there was no other way for the price of our sin to be paid. For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

After six hours on the cross Jesus cried his last. "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" In these days of self-isolation and social distancing here we read of Jesus in isolation. Jesus had always shared fellowship with God. Jesus was with God, and he was God, from the very beginning. Yet on the cross, as Jesus took our sin upon his shoulders, that fellowship, that bond was broken. God could not gaze upon His son, as Jesus who was perfect, became sin for us. God turned his back on his only son. Jesus knew isolation and loneliness. Such was the cost of our salvation.

As we go through the strictures of social isolation brought about by COVID-19 Jesus is well aware of how it is affecting you and your fears and concerns for the present and the future. The centurion remarks "Truly this man was God's Son!" In Luke's account of the crucifixion we also read that another, one of the criminals crucified with Jesus, recognised that Jesus was innocent and was God's Son as he said "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." Jesus replied, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise." That same offer is available to all of us today.

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