

Thought for the Day (6 April – Easter Day)

by Rev. Alan Stewart



Monday of Holy Week

'Even though the day be laden and my task dreary and my strength small, a song keeps singing in my heart. For I know that I am thine. I am part of Thee. Thou art kin to me. And all my times, all my times are in thy hands.'
(Northumbria Community)

As we step into this Holy Week; we follow in the footsteps of the One who made every act, however small and however dreary, an act of love. In

these days, as we strive to follow Christ's call to **love God** and **love others** as much as we **love ourselves**; how can we make each act an act of love?

Every task – every choice – every communication – every action – every one an act of love?

'And then the whole world walked inside and shut their doors and said we will stop it all, everything to protect our weaker ones, our sicker ones, our older ones. And nothing, nothing in the history of humankind, ever felt more like love than this' (CD)

Tuesday of Holy Week

And behold, a woman of the city, who was a sinner, when she learned that he was reclining at table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment, and standing behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head and kissed his feet and anointed them with ointment.

(Luke 7. 37-38)

In this intimate encounter, Jesus understands and appreciates this unorthodox and 'inappropriate' act of love.

His gratitude transformed that moment and the life of the woman involved. Gratitude can transform our moments; can transform us. In these days, how are we cultivating a gratitude for the things which, in easier times, we took for granted?

'When all this is over, may we never again take for granted a handshake with a stranger; full shelves at the store; conversations with neighbours; a crowded theatre;



Friday night out; the taste of communion; a routine check-up; the school rush each morning; coffee with a friend; the stadium roaring; each deep breath; a boring Tuesday; life itself. When this ends, may we find that we have become more like the people we wanted to be, we were called to be, we hoped to be and may we stay that way – better for each other because of the worst.'

(Laura Kelly Fanucci)

Wednesday in Holy week

'Cast your anxieties upon him, because he cares for you'

(1 Peter 5. v7)



Comforting words, and yet so much easier said than done. When the disciples followed Jesus into Jerusalem, the heartland of his enemies, they had a choice – would they trust their Master or would they allow fear to be their master? As we walk through our own uncertain times, can we choose to allow each anxious thought to ascend like a helium balloon to the One who cares for us?

Corrie Ten Boom, who lived through the horror of Holocaust, offers some wisdom for these days:

'Worrying is carrying tomorrow's load with today's strength – carrying two days at once. It is moving into tomorrow ahead of time. Worrying does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow; it empties today of its strength.'

Maundy Thursday

*An Upper Room did our Lord prepare
for those he loved until the end:
and his disciples still gather there
to celebrate their Risen Friend.*

*A lasting gift Jesus gave his own:
to share his bread, his loving cup.
Whatever burdens may bow us down,
he by his Cross shall lift us up.*

*And after Supper he washed their feet
for service, too, is sacrament.
In him our joy shall be made complete –
sent out to serve, as he was sent.*

*No end there is! We depart in peace,
he loves beyond the uttermost:
in every room in our Father's house
he will be there as Lord and Host.*

(Fred Pratt Green, 1903-2000)

On this day when we remember His last meal with His friends, let's remember that, although we are each confined to our separate spaces, we are **one** in communion with each other and with our Lord. May our homes become that Upper Room where we commune with our Lord, where we encounter His kindness and learn to become channels of His servant love.



Good Friday

Lord. I gaze upon your cross.
The frenzied words of hate and venom
hurled at you with wild abandon
by your despisers have now subsided.
The shrieks and taunting jeers
have now died down,
as your life ebbs quietly away.
The deafening, mocking cries
are now displaced by this deadly
stillness; awesome, burdensome, shameful.
And now,
in this unpeaceful quietness
I look at you,
and what I see overwhelms me
and brings me to the point
beyond all thoughts
where I begin to understand
the full magnitude
of what we have done to you
of what you have done
for me.



Holy Saturday

In this in-between day, caught between death and resurrection, we join in solidarity with all who are waiting.



'If your theology requires you to jump straight to silver linings or redemption and doesn't allow space for pain and suffering, your theology is too small' (Robert Vore)

'This is the time to be slow. Lie low to the wall, until the bitter weather passes. Try, as best you can, not to let the wire brush of doubt scrape from your heart all sense of yourself and your hesitant light. If you remain generous, time will be good and you will find your feet again on fresh pastures of promise, where the air will be kind and blushed with beginning'
(John O'Donoghue)

'Let there be a calming, a stilling of the voices that have laid their claim on you, that have made their home in you, that go with you even to the holy places but will not let you rest, will not let you hear your life with wholeness, or feel the grace that fashioned you.'

Let what distracts you cease. Let what divides you cease. Let there come an end to what diminishes and demeans and let depart all that keep you in its cage.

Let there be an opening into the quiet that lies beneath the chaos where you find the peace you did not think possible and see what shimmers within the storm'.

Jan Richardson



Easter Day

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" John 20 v19

Christ is risen – **He is risen indeed!**

Today we celebrate resurrection, not in our churches, but within our own homes. Still, the risen Lord comes and whispers 'peace'. Today, may we live in such a way that we are living proof of the hope of resurrection and a loving God.

Ever present God, be with us in our isolation, be close in our distancing, be healing in our sickness, be joy in our sadness, be light in our darkness, be wisdom in our confusion, be all that is familiar when all is unfamiliar, that when the doors reopen we may with the zeal of Pentecost inhabit our communities and speak of your

goodness to an emerging world. For Jesus' sake. Amen