

# Homilies from last Sunday

## Homily for Triumph of the Cross Year 2014



**Fr Tom says:** God sent Jesus to us so that “everyone who believes in him may not be lost!”

If ever you have ever come across a child separated from his parents and bawling his eyes out, you will know what it means to be truly lost. It is frightening, leaves one feeling helpless, hopeless, abandoned, not knowing where to turn; everything around is black, there is a lack of a reference point and nowhere to go. No wonder the child cries. No wonder, too, that God wanted to save us from this situation even though we had chosen to put ourselves into it in the first place – just like a child!!

And don't think that God waited for hundreds of years before doing something about our lostness. God tried a multiple means and used a multiple of people to help us, but, stubborn as we are, we either didn't listen or, if we did, it was only for a short time. Yet, the more wayward we became, the greater God worked to help us. Until, in the end, He gave us his greatest gift ever, Jesus.

Isn't it strange that to commemorate this wonderful gift of life of salvation, we use the memento of the Cross, the symbol which reveals how cruelly and maliciously we treated his Son? He hangs there, covered in blood, lifeless. Is that to remind us of what we did to him or is it to remind us how much he truly loved us? Unlike anything else symbolising victory in human history this is our symbol of success. Not only does it put Jesus into everyone's reach, it makes us want to reach out to him, to hold him, to cry, to express our love and gratitude. Paradoxically, like everything that Jesus did, it evokes the deepest and most sincere of our sentiments, desires and yes – love. It is only here on the cross that Jesus becomes truly human for us, without it he would have always appeared too good, too extraordinary, for us to believe this. As we embrace the crucified Christ, we find ourselves wanting him to have life, to come back, to live again and, in doing that, it inspires us to want life for others. He takes away our lostness, our darkness, our helplessness, our feeling of abandonment and fills us with purpose and a desire to bring that life to others who are lost. And we, too, are willing to do anything to achieve this because of our love for him.

In the beginning there were two trees - the tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. We chose the second of the two and it led to our downfall. Jesus chose the first tree, not for himself but for us, and he gave his life to it so that its fruit, the fruit of true life, he won not only for himself but for us all. The Cross is the tree of life, the tree of victory over death, the tree of redemption that brings us back from being lost. It does not come more wonderful than that. . . .

*"How splendid the cross of Christ! It brings life, not death; light, not darkness; Paradise, not its loss. It is the wood on which the Lord, like a great warrior, was wounded in hands and feet and side, but healed thereby our wounds. A tree has destroyed us; a tree now brought us life"* (Theodore of Studios).