

Reflection Wednesday Week 3 - 2021

Mark's Gospel makes it clear that the apostles fail to understand and get things wrong, time and time again during Jesus ministry. This is very consoling for those of us who similarly fail to understand the gospel and go wrong in many ways. Why? Because the Apostles later became great missionaries and great witnesses of the Word of God, of Good News. There is hope for us yet.

Hebrews reminds us that the laws of God - loving God and loving neighbour - are written into our DNA. Jesus' story refers to these laws as seeds, the majority of which fall on good ground, probable 95%. So, why just focus on the seeds that fail to take root, except to note that we need to nurture the good seed with water and sunlight - with God's grace and doing good works. This allows the sunlight, who is Jesus, to shine in us and through us, and we will bear fruit in his name.

Today is Holocaust Memorial Day, when we remember that along with Six million Jews more than five million non-Jews were murdered under the Nazi regime. Among them were Gypsies, Jehovah's Witnesses, homosexuals, blacks, the physically and mentally disabled, political opponents of the Nazis, including Communists and Social Democrats, dissenting clergy, resistance fighters, prisoners of war, Slavic peoples, and many individuals from the artistic communities whose opinions and works Hitler condemned.

The theme this year is *Be the light in the darkness*'.

Lord God, we remember today all those who bear the inner and outer scars of the Holocaust and of subsequent acts of genocide. Let them not be overwhelmed by the horrors that engulfed them. Be close to them. Help them see that you suffer with those who suffer, and that no wickedness can ever extinguish your infinite love. May remembrance make us alert to evil and its deceptive allure. Help us recognise our own capacity for evil. Purge it from us. Help us stand against evil and oppression, even if we have to suffer. Enable us to defend those not strong enough to defend themselves, and be ready to bring the light of your truth into the dark areas of human experience. Deepen our respect for everything you have made, and help us share in securing the maximum good for everyone in your world. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, who died for our sins, carries our sorrows, and heals our wounds. Amen.

In the light of Christ, let us see everyone as equally precious manifestations of the Divine, and give us the courage to face the darkness. Through our prayers and actions, help us to stand together with those who are suffering, so that Christ's light will banish all darkness, love will prevail over hate and good-will triumph over evil. Amen.

