

Reflection Friday Lent 5 – 2021

Jeremiah had the most difficult life as a prophet, constantly facing adversity, rejection and hostility from all sides. Yet, throughout his life and despite the loneliness and despair he faced, he continued to trust in God. Such strength of faith! Jesus must have found strength in reading Jeremiah in the loneliness and abandonment that he experienced as reflected in the Gospel. At least Jesus found solace in seeking refuge among the former disciples of John who were ready to accept and believe him. In times of despair, when feeling abandoned, isolated, alone and even rejected it is too easy to tell others to trust in God. In times like these we can read the passion in John's Gospel and know that Jesus has been there too as well as Jeremiah and other Prophets. Hopefully you will see a light at the end of the tunnel, however distant and dim it might be. These might not feel like sacred times but they are. Like the Footsteps reflection, we are unaware of God's presence and that we are being carried. Even Jesus cried out in despair on the Cross but his faith remained firm and so will yours. We are invited to walk with Jesus in these most difficult of days, to experience with him in some small way the suffering and agony so that what will eventually follow eventually helps to strengthen our faith in the difficult times we face in life.

Despair *(by Janet Martin)*

You long to reach with poisoned fingers
deep into the fragile mind,
crippling any hope that lingers
as you smother, chill and blind.
Here you reign with icy sceptre
in a cold and darkened void,
paralyzing with vile nectar
hearts that once were over-joyed.

But into this stricken chasm
Lo, there beams a ray of light,
like a gentle breath from heaven
whispering into the night.
Dissolving there the curse and poison
with a blood-drop from a Tree,
as He restores hope and rejoicing
and He sets the victim free.