

## Reflection Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> Week Lent 2024

Move forward a few days and think of Jesus standing before Caiaphas at his trial early on Good Friday Morning. Caiaphas is interrogating Christ who stands silently before him. Caiaphas had organised the plot to kill Jesus. As president of the Sanhedrin, he had Jesus arrested to search for excuses to bring Jesus before Pilot and seek the death sentence. Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin feared that their own influence and power would diminish if they let Jesus live. Jesus had to die!

Caiaphas justifies this course of action by saying that it was '*better for one man to die rather than have the nation torn apart*'. Thus, setting the stage for Holy Week.

Pragmatism is a quality often admired in political leaders. Caiaphas is an example of a rather deadly form of political pragmatism that has become commonplace among politicians in recent years. Jesus was a threat and therefore should be eliminated. This outlook of considering one individual as expendable for the sake of the perceived good of the majority is not unique to the time and place of Jesus. It has always been around and still is. The recent Russian election is a perfect example of this. Navalny was expendable for the sake of the nation as a whole?

Fortunately, this is the complete opposite to the outlook of Jesus. For Jesus considers every individual important in their own right. Jesus, the good shepherd, calls us by name. He called Lazarus from the tomb by name; he called Zacchaeus down from his tree by name; he called Mary Magdalene outside the empty tomb by name. The Lord calls each of us by name in our baptism; we are each precious in his sight, no matter what the rest of the world thinks of us.