

Christ is being crucified today in Jerusalem. We hear today's account and wonder at the depth of it: how it so readily engages our emotions. This is not a week to look forward to. Why do we need to keep re- visiting the scene of the crime we might say. It's visceral and not only because the memory of it lives on but the conflict at the heart of humanity, of being human, lives on. Jesus approaches Jerusalem knowing full well that this place, and this people, including his own disciples, represent all that is good and all that is bad about humanity. It's a maelstrom of joy and suffering, dark and light; a crucible where holiness is forged not despite but because of the coming together of these two elements: the fickle crowd shouting hosannas at one moment and condemnations at the next; the contrasting actions of the woman willing to anoint the feet of Jesus and the treachery of Judas; Peter's avowal of faith and his abject failure to follow it through; the priestly pretensions of the scribes and elders and Caiaphas preaching holiness no doubt on the one hand but practising all the dark arts of power-play on the other; Pilate too with all the powers of a plenipotentiary but riven by fear at what both his subjects and his master in Rome might do. The Passion then as a re- telling of all our fears including those of Jesus at Gethsemane and even on the cross itself. But Jesus is faithful and that is all we need to know for now, even as Christ is still being crucified today in Jerusalem.

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