

Palm Sunday Year B 24.3.24

We may have a sense that we've been here before – why are we re-visiting this pain, re-opening these wounds? Surely we know the outcome, let's go there and stay there and see all in a resurrected light. And there is a finality in what Jesus has done, of what God has done in Jesus, which can justify this, but it would be unreal because it's obvious that we still live in a world of wounds. The dynamic we are re-visiting is one in which we gain victory and hope precisely in and through our woundedness – Christ goes there still. What God has done in Jesus is to take that very same journey into the woundedness of the human condition and show us the way through – not by evasion, not by misplaced trust in human progress, or riches or power or indeed in humanity itself, but by living it to its dregs – emptying himself to assume the condition of a slave. Diogenes in his barrel did something of the same – beholden to no-one in his wilful poverty. The parallel is not exact but the challenge to authority, to the imbalance of power which accounts for so many of our ills, is similar. Here is a supposed conversation between Diogenes and Alexander the Great

*Alexander: Dost thou not know that I am able to give thee a kingdom?*

*Diogenes: I know thou art able, if I had one, to take it from me, and I shall never place any value on that which such as thou art can deprive me of.*

So like the exchange between Jesus and Pilate in John's gospel which we'll hear on Friday as we continue to travel with him through this world of wounds, Jesus takes us through all the imbalances of power which beset us by, like Diogenes, not allowing them ultimate power. There is a greater power at work which transcends all others, even the power of death, and Christ holds that power for us, and there is no other name, no other path worth following.

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