

Jesus weeps for Jerusalem



The window of Dominus Flevit, Jerusalem

Lord, we pray for Jerusalem, that divided and suffering city, that even now it may discover the things that belong to its peace – peace between all people of all religions. And in our own lives may our eyes be open to your judgement, so we may be led back to your unfailing mercy. Amen.

Richard Llewelin *reflects on* Luke 13:31-end

On the slopes of the Mount of Olives, facing the city of Jerusalem, directly opposite what was the Temple area (now a Muslim shrine) is a little church called Dominus Flevit – “The Lord wept”. Its roof is in the shape of a teardrop; its east window of clear glass looks out over the Holy City. The church commemorates the occasions when Jesus stood on or near that spot looking across to Jerusalem, longing – just longing – for the people to open their hearts to the good news about God that he was proclaiming.

But, with a few exceptions, they did not. “And now,” he said, “there is your Temple, forsaken by God.”

Here we are given a picture of mercy and judgement, side by side.

There are those who think of God as so completely merciful that our wrongdoing will be indulged, and those who think of God as wrathful and quick to condemn. This story shows us how God’s mercy and judgement walk hand in hand. God’s mercy is indeed without limit, other than that which we place upon it. And God’s judgement is indeed uncompromising, for God has no truck with evil. But even that judgement is full of mercy, for by it God shows us the folly of our ways in order to bring us back to love and obedience.

It is also true that God’s mercy can become “hidden from your eyes” (Luke 19:42), because we close our eyes and stop our ears and harden our hearts. 🙏

Words from the cross, part 2

A series for Lent

by Caroline Fletcher

“He replied, ‘Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.’”
Luke 23:43

How do we feel when someone is punished for a crime? Do we feel concern for the criminal, or glad that justice has been done?

Jesus was criticised by religious leaders for associating with sinners, but argued that as a doctor cares for those who are sick, so he came to help those who were spiritually needy. It is ironic then that he died

between two criminals, associated with outcasts to the end. He could have ignored them, but instead when one turned to him, he offered him paradise. “Paradise” was the word used of a monarch’s garden which it was a special honour to enter. Christ gave the man not only forgiveness, but privilege, too, earned simply through acknowledging wrongdoing and asking for help.

Jesus died being mocked for saving others and not himself. Yet he came to save all people, no matter how undeserving. May his Church today move with this amazing grace! 🙏

Finding God on the smallholding

by Jeni Parsons

Several trees have come down on our land in recent storms. I have been astounded at the sheer weight and height of what had seemed a small tree when it was upright. Each tree, when dried for a few years, will provide us with firewood for several

months so we waste none of it. But we can also see that each tree was home to countless other creatures before and a place for ferns and small plants to grow high in the air. So once again I notice that we are sharing everything with others. This tree has old nests in it, ferns and toadstools growing on it, beetles under the bark and sheep wool stuck in it where our ewes have rubbed against it to soothe their itches. So each tree is a sacred world in itself already and we are only the latecomers to its celebration. 🙏

“Mercy... is the most profound form of justice. It opens the door to heaven itself, because mercy is love’s second name.”

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