

Tuesday in Holy Week

As I enter into prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly; to re-centre my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

To take a few long and slow breaths

To breathe in the love of God

And as you breathe out, to let go of any troubles of the day.

Still my heart, like the quiet of the darkest hours. See I have engraved you on the Palms of my hands

So as we begin lets trace the sign of the cross on the palm of each of our hands, reminding ourselves of the love that God has for us

Be still and know that I am God- StF 18

***Be still and know that I am God X3
I am the Lord who saves and heals X3
In, you O Lord, I put my trust. X3***

Reading for today John 12:20-36

Well this is the Lentiest Lent that I have ever lented. And I don't like Lent at the best of times. I spent 5 hours sitting in my office try to reflect on these words from John's gospel. I wrote quite a lot about 'those who love their life will lose it.'... A sentence that is totally appropriate and applicable to the life that we are all living right now. But somehow I came out crying and having to googling some upbeat happy songs to play on Alexa as I took a stroll up and down my garden. I sat down for the second time and googled what others were doing on a sharing forum that I'm a part of. One person reflected on the sacredness to the space that we'd been given. Time to stop and savour the present moment, so I wrote something about that.

Only, I had to stop every 10 minutes to attend to 'mum, I can't find the glue' and 'mum, is it snack time yet', 'mum, I'm sorry we pulled down the curtains while we made a den' and my personal favourite 'mum I've finished' words shouted from the mouth of a 3 year old on the toilet. So, I decided that wasn't an authentic reflection. So, I did what I often do when I'm at my wits end, I text my dad and asked him to pray. His response was what did you do at college? Well dad, I distinctly remember being given a talking to after saying the word Hallelujah in the chapel during

Lent. There were definitely no flowers allowed and I once walked out of the end of term Lent service upset!

I remember going to the head of college to talk about this and discussing our contrasting traditions. I remember her saying, there will be times in ministry where you don't have the head space to write a new prayer of approach and thanksgiving and all the other elements that make up worship. And it's for those moments when we let the liturgy hold us.

I never knew how true those words would be. For whilst I wait, in this uncomfortable lent period, in the mystery, in the unknown, in the mourning of normal life. In the too much talk about death, the losses, the trauma and disappointments, I know somehow I'm held inside the rhythm of daily worship. And however, uncomfortable I feel Christ enters the muddle of doubt in darkness. I'm more comfortable in Easter than Lent.

There has to be holy week and the death of Good Friday before the Resurrection.

And so, during these moments, when all words seem to be lost

When we are in the longest lent ever.

To stay in the uncomfortable place where there are no easy answers to the difficult questions... the places where the usual platitudes fall flat.

Somehow, from a place of loss and misery, grief and pain, God enacted resurrection.

Often, it's only in retrospect, only as I look back at the dark times in my life, that I understand what resurrection really is.

And so, without the knowledge ... of hindsight, I look forward to Easter in its many forms. And the risen-ess of Christ and the acclamation of joy. Until, then, I am held in the mystery of Holy Week. Knowing somehow Christ is with us.

May God be our centre, our desire and our hope. In Jesus Christ. Amen.