



HOLY WEEK WITH BISHOP ROBERT

This year we were privileged to have Bishop Robert with us during Holy Week. The week explored the events leading up to the death of Jesus –an intriguing and profound time for Christians throughout the world.

MONDAY AT FLOOKBURGH - SONGS OF LOVE AND FORGIVENESS

Bishop Robert led us with pictures, words, well known hymns and prayers through reflections on this theme showing us how the events of Holy Week go right to the heart of our deepest human emotions and needs – our life, our hopes, our failures and our passions.

'If God is for us, who can be against us?.....For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation – there is nothing that will ever be able to separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ our Lord.'

Romans 8: 31b – 39



TUESDAY AT HIGH NEWTON– SACRIFICE



This session was a time for reflection on God’s supreme sacrifice. The text was Isaiah 53 and the first hymn was ‘There is a green hill far away’. Bishop Robert explored the simplicity of the words of the hymn in terms of the unfathomable and the unimaginable, of what God does through the death of Jesus and what He does to save us, how we have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God but how, freely given, God’s grace sets us free.

'But He endured the suffering that should have been ours, the pain that we should have borne.....All of us were like sheep that were lost, each of us going our own way, but the Lord made the punishment fall on Him, the punishment all of us deserved.....He took the place of many sinners and prayed that they might be forgiven.' Isaiah 53

WEDNESDAY AT HAVERTHWAITE – BETRAYAL AND FORGIVENESS

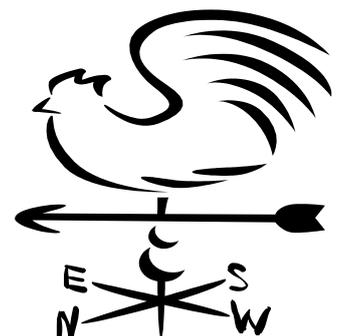
We were asked to put ourselves in the life and character of Peter. When we do this we can see much of ourselves in him. He denied Jesus but he was forgiven, somehow and from somewhere Jesus found the strength to not only forgive but in Peter’s case to even restore him. And Peter became the rock on which the church was founded.

God’s promise to us is that there is hope and new life for all of us after failure. If we reflect on our lives, bring ourselves to God and ask for forgiveness he will renew and strengthen us.

One of our hymns was:

***'Be still, for the presence of the Lord, the Holy One, is here;
Come bow before him now with reverence and fear:
In him no sin is found - we stand on holy ground.
Be still, for the presence of the Lord, the Holy One, is here.'***

N.B. The rooster is a symbol for the Apostle Peter, the first Pope. The symbol



refers to the cock (rooster) crowing during the Passion narrative, the incident that causes Peter to realise his betrayal of Christ. Christ told Peter during the Last Supper that He would be denied three times before 'the cock crows', Peter denied that he would ever forsake His Lord, yet out of fear, he did. So the symbol of the rooster stands as a reminder to all of us not to give in to our human fear, to remain faithful to Christ always

THURSDAY – MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICE AT CARTMEL PRIORY

Bishop Robert spoke movingly of Jesus as He washed the feet of His disciples, a 'disgusting' job and in those days given to the most menial servant in the house. Washing their feet was not just a symbolic gesture for Jesus but a giving of Himself to them in life. It was the greatest giving to the least, an example of what we should do for others as He has done for us. If we follow Him in faith we will be led to a different place, we will be blessed. Jesus touched the untouchables, welcomed the outcasts, challenged the pious and comforted the homeless.....He was the servant king.



Our prayer was:

'Lord Jesus Christ, You have taught us that what we do for the least of our brothers and sisters we do also for You; give us the will to be the servant of others as You were the servant of all, and gave up Your life and died for us, but are alive and reign, now and forever. Amen'

The essence of God's ministry through Jesus was summed up in the final hymn:

***'Brother, sister, let me serve you;
let me be as Christ to you;
pray that I may have the grace to
let you be my servant too.....'***

GOOD FRIDAY- ACT OF WITNESS AT ST CHARLES' FIELD AND GOOD FRIDAY LITURGY WITH BISHOP ROBERT IN ST PAUL'S, GRANGE

The Liturgy of Good Friday was a moving service and the sermon from Bishop Robert left us with much food for thought. We reflected on the words 'Good Friday' for indeed that day had nothing to do with good: it was about cruelty and darkness, it was about evil being done to an innocent man who was despised and brutalised at the end and to whom death was devised as a form of torture, designed to cause fear in those who saw it. But there were moments of kindness when a stranger carried the cross and then when Jesus was offered vinegar on a sponge.



We explored, in Matthew, Mark and Luke, one single verse, something that happened to transform the darkness. As Jesus dies he commends himself into God's hands and from that moment the world and religion changed forever. At the very moment of his dying something happened elsewhere – the curtain in the temple was torn from top to bottom. Bishop Robert told us that the temple was a most impressive building, the focal point for God's chosen people. To the Jews, the curtain separated the main part of the temple from the 'holy of holies' where they believed God could be found. The curtain was 60 feet long and 30 feet high, obscuring where God was. Only the High Priest could enter there on the Day of Atonement (with a rope tied to his ankles to be dragged

out in case of difficulties). From then on, not only is God to be found in a special place but he is known and found everywhere. God is for everyone. God is for me and God is for you. God is good!

EASTER SUNDAY



This was a wonderful service attended by approximately 100 people and greatly enjoyed by all. The Paschal Candle, which had been lit during the Easter Vigil at Cartmel Priory on Easter Eve, was processed into church, and we rejoiced as we celebrated the resurrection of Jesus Christ after his crucifixion.

It was a joyous service much enhanced by the stunning floral displays around church and the beautiful crosses made by the congregation. Nick used the cross of flowers made by the children in school to illustrate the transformation from Good Friday to Easter Sunday. The sad buds opened and turned into happy flowers with lovely smiling faces.

A finale of sherry, Easter biscuits, chocolates and Easter eggs helped to make this a memorable celebration of Easter Sunday - and also to join with Bishop Nigel and Celia as they celebrated their Ruby Wedding the week before.

OUR CONGRATULATIONS TO THEM BOTH FROM EVERYONE IN ST PAUL'S AND THE FELL CHURCH.

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