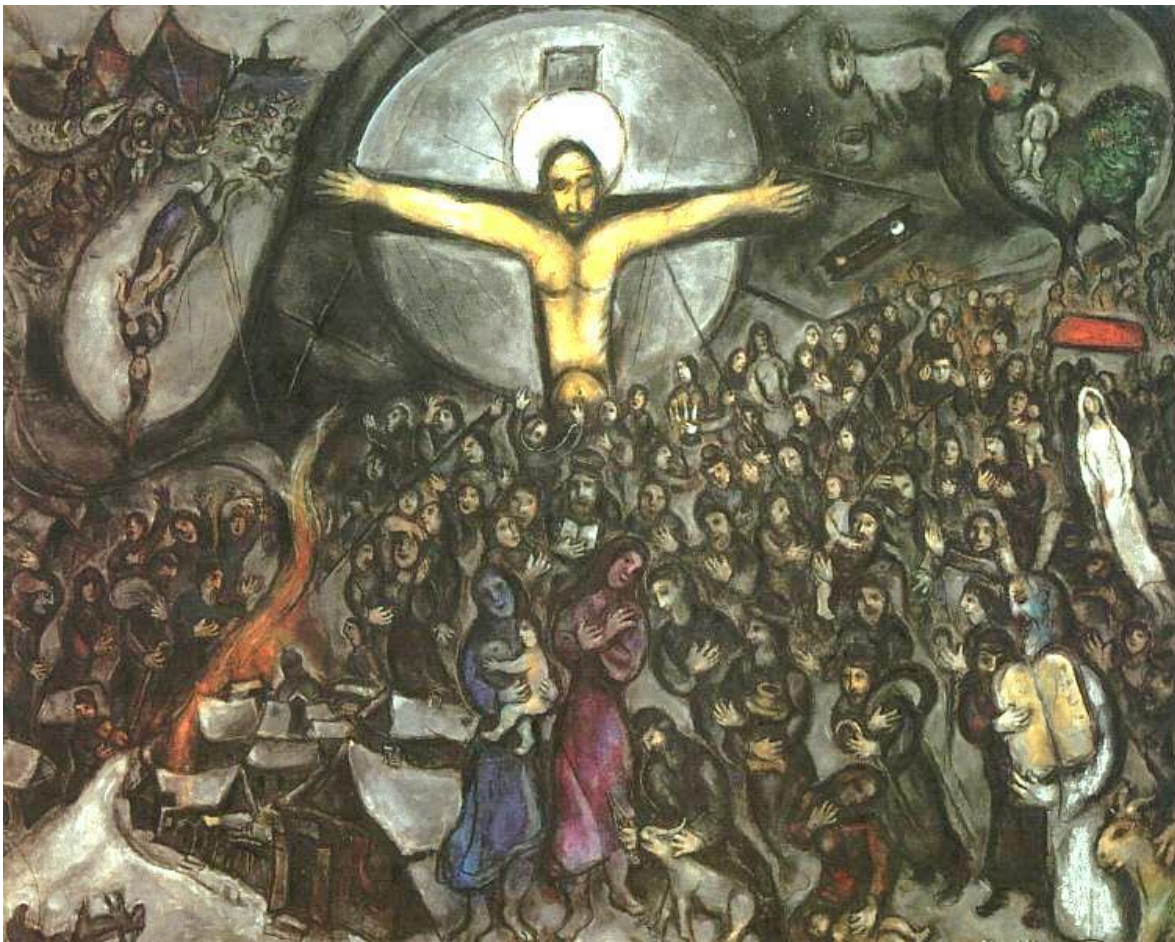




Twenty Second Sunday after Pentecost Sunday, October 21st, 2018

O Saving Victim! A Total Rethink about God



“We need an incarnate God, a God put to death,
so that we might live, and we were put to death with him.” (Or. 45.28)

Gregory of Nazianzus

GATHERING

Announcements

Greeting

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit
The Lord be with you
and also with you

**Hymn: All hail the power of Jesus' name (TiS 224, Diadem,
Edward Perronet)**

Introduction to the Theme of Re-Thinking God

These last weeks we have taken steps to unpick Mark's theology of the cross. In it, we have done three things: affirmed that the cross, speaks to us of God's grace to us: through the cross we learn that we are forgiven – this is the traditional theology of the church, often referred to as the "atonement". We took further steps however, and dug a little deeper, asking what does the cross say about human beings. We offered two answers to that question: first that, the cross and crucifixion speak of a world where there are crucified and crucifiers, victims and hangmen: this has not changed throughout human history. The cross brings realism to the way we see the world, affording us little chance to escape into fantasies and allusions. We still crucify and we still generate victims. The second answer went to the heart of our inner life: the cross interrogates us, examines us in terms of raising questions about what makes us tick, challenging the way we rationalize our thinking and acts, the way we build fantasies about ourselves.

Today, we return to God, to God and the cross, to Mark's insistence that ***God is a crucified God***, not a glorious One of power and prestige. For Mark, this has meaning which is hard to 'swallow'. "If we follow a crucified God, it may put us in the firing-line as well".

A Community Prayer: Do We Place You in a Tomb?

This poem/prayer really arises from the Gospel of John's story of the burial of Jesus (19:38-42). It is a prayer that asks about the Christian tendency to simply place Jesus in the tomb and leave him there. The Christian life cannot and does not do this: rather it actively follows a crucified God in real life, placing this disturbing idea front and centre. It is the cross, the idea of a God who is murdered, that shapes and must shape, not just an attitude of gratitude, but a deeper reading of God, the world and discipleship

Do we place you in a tomb, Loving One?
Do we wrap God's saving love in funeral spices?

Having seen justice pierced, truth undone,
 corruption's blade, red-edged by power's devices
 and faithfulness in us made frail by fear.

Do we gather up our hundred-weight of grief
 and give a silent thanks that a tomb is near
 where hope may be interred and bruised belief

Do we deliver to death's endless cave
 your words of peace, and no more speak
 of hope, of love, of the life you gave?

Our feet on such a walk, surely stumble.
 Your light once shone into the world's shadow.
 Now our way is dark. Our fingers fumble
 for a candle. O, how can we let you go?

Do we place you in a tomb, Loving One?

Our Confession and Reconciliation

Let us be still and listen to the voice of God

Silence

O God,
 enable us to see beyond ourselves:
 to the one next to us,
 facing us,
 far from us.

O God,
 enable us to think beyond ourselves:
 to the one next to us,
 facing us,
 far from us.

O God enable us to live beyond ourselves:
 to the one next to us,

facing us,
far from us.

Crucify our tribalism

***May we follow you and none other, the crucified God
Amen***

The young people leave for SMG

Some Observations about a Crucified God

The God of freedom, the true God, is... not recognized by his power and glory in the history of the world, but through his helplessness and his death on the scandal of the cross of Jesus

Jürgen Moltmann, "The Crucified God: The Cross of Christ as the Foundation and Criticism of Christian Theology"

When the crucified Jesus is called "the image of the invisible God," the meaning is that THIS is God, and God is like THIS."

Jürgen Moltmann, "The Crucified God: The Cross of Christ as the Foundation and Criticism of Christian Theology"

From the usual situation of seeking help from God, pleading for help, praying for good fortune, that is common to all people, even agnostics and atheists, not to mention Christians; the path of discipleship leads to something much deeper: being dragged into the suffering of God in Jesus Christ, where human beings share in God's impotence. This the very reversal of everything the religious person expects from God. Humans are called to share in God's suffering, to suffer with God, the godlessness of the world.

Dorothee Söelle, The Silent Cry: Mysticism and Resistance

Come down from the mount to labour in the earth; in the earth to serve, to be crucified. The Life came down, that He might be murdered; the Bread came down, that He might hunger; the Way came down, that life might be wearied in the way; the Fountain came down, that he might thirst. And you, do you seek to be comfortable?

Augustine 354-430, Sermon 28

BREAKING OPEN THE WORD

Job 38:1-7, (34-41) (Good News Translation) – Job cops some pushback from God

Marian Kingham

We have not had the opportunity to pursue the readings from Job these last weeks: perhaps next time around. This is a pity because Job puts before us very modern questions. In contemporary times, perhaps the main reason for people's choice not to believe has to do with suffering: how can one believe in God who permits it? The Book of Job, indirectly addresses this question through the story of Job who suffers "big-time". The wager made by Satan with God, is that Job only believes because he is wealthy and complacent. If his fortunes were reversed, Satan suggests he would reject faith. And so, the story flows on, with Job suffering, and having that suffering compounded as he is told by his 'friends' that it is all due to his and failures in life (an accompanying spiritual and mental torture). In this reading, God pushes back at Job's justified anger, but does not attempt to express displeasure. Instead God engages with Job with respect, trying to open a bigger world to him. God appeals to Job to take a broader view of reality, himself and God.

38 Then out of the storm the LORD spoke to Job.

² Who are you to question my wisdom
with your ignorant, empty words?

³ Now stand up straight
and answer the questions I ask you.

⁴ Were you there when I made the world?
If you know so much, tell me about it.

⁵ Who decided how large it would be?
Who stretched the measuring line over it?
Do you know all the answers?

⁶ What holds up the pillars that support the earth?
Who laid the cornerstone of the world?

⁷ In the dawn of that day the stars sang together,
and the heavenly beings^[a] shouted for joy.

³⁴ Can you shout orders to the clouds
and make them drench you with rain?

³⁵ And if you command the lightning to flash,
will it come to you and say, "At your service"?

³⁶ Who tells the ibis^[c] when the Nile will flood,
or who tells the rooster that rain will fall?^[d]

³⁷ Who is wise enough to count the clouds

and tilt them over to pour out the rain,
 38 rain that hardens the dust into lumps?
 39 Do you find food for lions to eat,
 and satisfy hungry young lions
 40 when they hide in their caves,
 or lie in wait in their dens?
 41 Who is it that feeds the ravens
 when they wander about hungry,
 when their young cry to me for food?

The word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

Mark 10:35-45 (Good News Translation) – The Request of James and John – children of entitlement. Gilda Dornan

In Mark's Gospel, we are reminded time and time again of the scandal and problem of the cross. Through his so-called 'theology of the cross', Mark is upending the expectation that being on God's side brings advantages to life, not least power. Instead, God is less a God, and more a God who has been crucified. This has enormous implications in terms of world-view and ethical awareness. It means that God who is crucified with the victims of this world, sees reality *through* these victims: what is often referred to as "seeing the world from below". Moreover, the ethics that God stands for, is an ethics of solidarity, being dragged into suffering, to suffer with God the brutal godlessness of the world. This is what James and John cannot compute, this is what we Christians still resist.

35 Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Jesus.
 "Teacher," they said, "there is something we want you to do for us."

36 "What is it?" Jesus asked them.

37 They answered, "When you sit on your throne in your glorious Kingdom, we want you to let us sit with you, one at your right and one at your left."

38 Jesus said to them, "You don't know what you are asking for. Can you drink the cup of suffering that I must drink? Can you be baptized in the way I must be baptized?"

39 "We can," they answered.

Jesus said to them, “You will indeed drink the cup I must drink and be baptized in the way I must be baptized. ⁴⁰ But I do not have the right to choose who will sit at my right and my left. It is God who will give these places to those for whom he has prepared them.”

⁴¹ When the other ten disciples heard about it, they became angry with James and John. ⁴² So Jesus called them all together to him and said, “You know that those who are considered rulers of the heathen have power over them, and the leaders have complete authority. ⁴³ This, however, is not the way it is among you. If one of you wants to be great, you must be the servant of the rest; ⁴⁴ and if one of you wants to be first, you must be the slave of all. ⁴⁵ For even the Son of Man did not come to be served; he came to serve and to give his life to redeem many people.”

The Gospel of the Lord
Praise to you Lord Christ

Hymn: Sing a New Song (Dan Schutte)

*Sing a new song unto the Lord;
 Let your song be sung from mountains high
 Sing a new song unto the Lord
 Singing alleluia*

Yahweh's people dance for joy
 O come before the Lord
 And play for him on glad tambourines
 And let your trumpet sound

*Sing a new song unto the Lord;
 Let your song be sung from mountains high
 Sing a new song unto the Lord
 Singing alleluia*

Rise, O children, from your sleep;
 Your Saviour now has come
 He has turned your sorrow to joy
 And filled your soul with song

*Sing a new song unto the Lord;
 Let your song be sung from mountains high
 Sing a new song unto the Lord
 Singing alleluia*

Glad my soul for I have seen
 The glory of the Lord
 The trumpet sounds; the dead shall be raised
 I know my Saviour lives

*Sing a new song unto the Lord;
 Let your song be sung from mountains high
 Sing a new song unto the Lord
 Singing alleluia*

Some Thoughts:

Offering

Doxology

***Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,
 praise him, all creatures here below,
 praise him above, ye heavenly host,
 praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.***

Prayer of Dedication

Prayers of the People

The one who prays ends each petition with the words, ***“help us to see”***, and the congregational response, ***“to follow you - crucified”***.

Seng Eng Low

Lord's Prayer

Let us say the Lord's Prayer

***Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.***

***Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.***

***For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.***

하늘에 계신 우리 아버지여
이름이 거룩히 여김을 받으시오며
나라이 임하옵시며
뜻이 하늘에서 이룬 것 같이
땅에서도 이루어지이다.
오늘날 우리에게 일용할 양식을 주옵시고
우리가 우리에게
죄 지은 자를 사하여 준 것 같이
우리 죄를 사하여 주옵시고
우리를 시험에 들게 하지 마옵시고
다만 악에서 구하옵소서
대개 나라와 권세와 영광이
아버지께 영원히 있사옵나이다. 아멘

Closing Hymn: In Christ Alone

“In Christ alone my hope is found;
 He is my light, my strength, my song;
 This cornerstone, this solid ground,
 Firm through the fiercest drought and storm.
 What heights of love, what depths of peace,
 When fears are stilled, when strivings cease!
 My comforter, my all in all—
 Here in the love of Christ I stand.

In Christ alone, Who took on flesh,
 Fullness of God in helpless babe!
 This gift of love and righteousness,
 Scorned by the ones He came to save.
 Till on that cross as Jesus died,
 The wrath of God was satisfied;
 For ev’ry sin on Him was laid—
 Here in the death of Christ I live.

There in the ground His body lay,
 Light of the world by darkness slain;
 Then bursting forth in glorious day,
 Up from the grave He rose again!
 And as He stands in victory,
 Sin’s curse has lost its grip on me;
 For I am His and He is mine—
 Bought with the precious blood of Christ.

No guilt in life, no fear in death—
 This is the pow’r of Christ in me;
 From life’s first cry to final breath,
 Jesus commands my destiny.
 No pow’r of hell, no scheme of man,
 Can ever pluck me from His hand;
 Till He returns or calls me home—
 Here in the pow’r of Christ I’ll stand.”

Blessing and Sending Out

Christ is life!

Let us live
Following the crucified God and no other,
with perception and discernment,
without fear, with imagination and courage

Our service has ended
Go in peace to love and serve the Lord

In the name of Christ

**Going Out: Shalom to you now (TiS 778, Somos del Señor,
Elise, Shoemaker Eslinger)**

Musical Postlude

Pianist:

Rosemary Osborne



Oscar Romero, canonized, Sunday, October 14th, 2018, Rome

