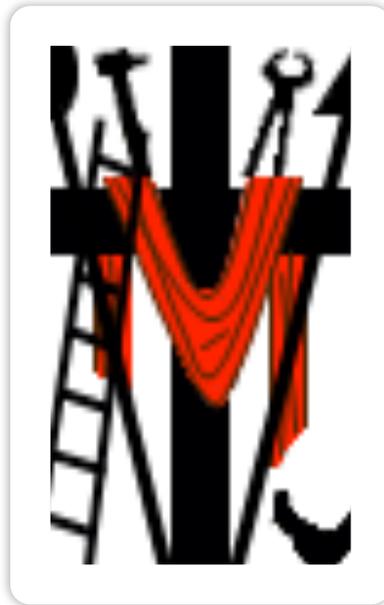


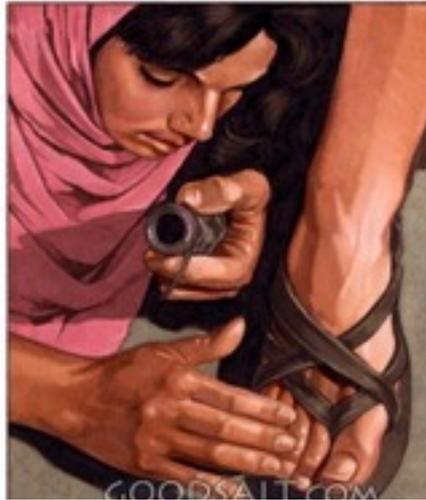
People of the Passion

Lent 2018 St Andrews Pau



1. *The strange economy of love*
THE WOMAN WHO ANNOINTS JESUS
2. *Love's Expense*
JUDAS
3. *Love's labour's lost*
SIMON PETER
4. *The Politics of Love*
PONTIUS PILATE
5. *The Household of Love*
THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.

**LENT 1- The strange economy of love:
The woman who anoints Jesus
Mark 14; 3-9 Isaiah 49:13-22 Psalm 34:1-9**



The woman who anoints Jesus

Mark 14.3-9 The Anointing at Bethany

³ While he was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper,^[b] as he sat at the table, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very costly ointment of nard, and she broke open the jar and poured the ointment on his head. ⁴ But some were there who said to one another in anger, “Why was the ointment wasted in this way? ⁵ For this ointment could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii,^[c] and the money given to the poor.” And they scolded her. ⁶ But Jesus said, “Let her alone; why do you trouble her? She has performed a good service for me. ⁷ For you always have the poor with you, and you can show kindness to them whenever you wish; but you will not always have me. ⁸ She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for its burial.⁹ Truly I tell you, wherever the good news^[d] is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in remembrance of her.

Isaiah 49:13-22

¹³ Sing for joy, O heavens, and exult, O earth; break forth, O mountains, into singing! For the LORD has comforted his people, and will have compassion on his suffering ones.¹⁴ But Zion said, “The LORD has forsaken me, my Lord has forgotten me.”
¹⁵ Can a woman forget her nursing child, or show no compassion for the child of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you.
¹⁶ See, I have inscribed you on the palms of my hands; your walls are continually before me.¹⁷ Your builders outdo your destroyers, and those who laid you waste go away from you.
¹⁸ Lift up your eyes all around and see; they all gather, they come to you. As I live, says

the LORD, you shall put all of them on like an ornament, and like a bride you shall bind them on.
¹⁹ Surely your waste and your desolate places and your devastated land—surely now you will be too crowded for your inhabitants, and those who swallowed you up will be far away.²⁰ The children born in the time of your bereavement will yet say in your hearing: The place is too crowded for me; make room for me to settle.”
²¹ Then you will say in your heart, “Who has borne me these? I was bereaved and barren, exiled and put away— so who has reared these? I was left all alone— where then have these come from?”
²² Thus says the Lord GOD: I will soon lift up my hand to the nations, and raise my signal to the peoples; and they shall bring your sons in their bosom, and your daughters shall be carried on their shoulders

Psalm 34:1-9 Praise for Deliverance from Trouble

Of David, when he feigned madness before Abimelech, so that he drove him out, and he went away.

¹ I will bless the LORD at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth.
² My soul makes its boast in the LORD; let the humble hear and be glad.
³ O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together.
⁴ I sought the LORD, and he answered me, and delivered me from all my fears.
⁵ Look to him, and be radiant; so your^[a] faces shall never be ashamed.
⁶ This poor soul cried, and was heard by the LORD, and was saved from every trouble.
⁷ The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and delivers them.
⁸ O taste and see that the LORD is good; happy are those who take refuge in him.
⁹ O fear the LORD, you his holy ones, for those who fear him have no want.

Questions to ponder

- 1 Does this woman of Bethany become the first of Christ’s disciples to acknowledge his impending death? For this, Jesus praises her in unparalleled terms. “Truly I tell you, wherever the good news is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in remembrance of her.”
2. When we break the bread and drink the wine, we rarely pour out the oil.

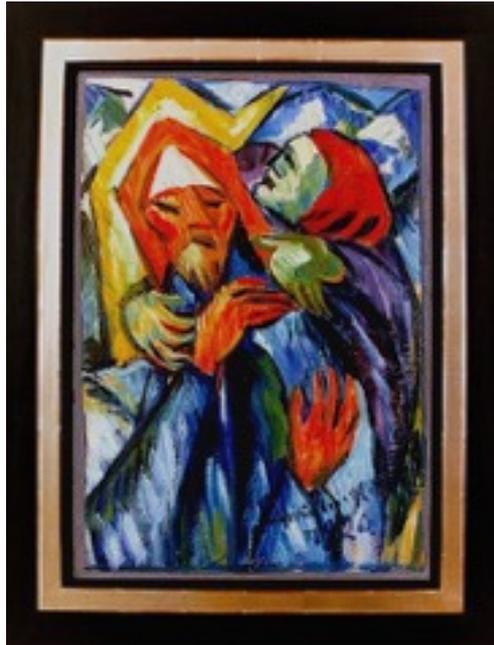
 Jesus wanted us to remember, but we have forgotten. We aren’t even sure of this woman’s name. Should we Perhaps we should bring back this oil, this costly perfume, and make it part of our Eucharist?
- 3 If we do, do you think it could be helpful.

+++++

But in the midst of all this symbolism and foreshadowing, Jesus sees something else at work. He interprets the woman’s act of worship as preparation for his burial. When the disciples rebuke the woman for what they see as a waste of money, Jesus responds by saying, “Let her alone; why do you trouble her? She has performed a good service for me. For you always have the poor with you, and you can show kindness to them whenever you wish; but you will not always have me. She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for its burial.”

LENT 2 -Love's Expense: JUDAS
Matt: 27; 3-10-Acts 1; 15-22-Psalm 25

In our 2nd meditation on the people of the passion we turn from the story of Light about the woman whose love was so expensive to the very dark side about expensive love...the story of Judas.



Matthew 27 : 3-10 - The Suicide of Judas

3 When Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus[a] was condemned, he repented and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders. 4 He said, “I have sinned by betraying innocent[b] blood.” But they said, “What is that to us? See to it yourself.” 5 Throwing down the pieces of silver in the temple, he departed; and he went and hanged himself. 6 But the chief priests, taking the pieces of silver, said, “It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since they are blood money.” 7 After conferring together, they used them to buy the potter’s field as a place to bury foreigners. 8 For this reason that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. 9 Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah,[c] “And they took[d] the thirty pieces of silver, the price of the one on whom a price had been set,[e] on whom some of the people of Israel had set a price, 10 and they gave[f] them for the potter’s field, as the Lord commanded me.”

Psalm 25 vs 16ff

Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted.

¹⁷ Relieve the troubles of my heart, and bring me^[a] out of my distress.

¹⁸ Consider my affliction and my trouble, and forgive all my sins.

ACTS 1 .15-12

In those days Peter stood up among the believers^[d] (together the crowd numbered about one hundred twenty persons) and said, ¹⁶“Friends,^[e] the scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit through David foretold concerning Judas, who became a guide for those who arrested Jesus— ¹⁷for he was numbered among us and was allotted his share in this ministry.” ¹⁸(Now this man acquired a field

with the reward of his wickedness; and falling headlong,^[1] he burst open in the middle and all his bowels gushed out. ¹⁹ This became known to all the residents of Jerusalem, so that the field was called in their language Hakeldama, that is, Field of Blood.) ²⁰ “For it is written in the book of Psalms, ‘Let his homestead become desolate, and let there be no one to live in it’; and ‘Let another take his position of overseer.’ ²¹ So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, ²² beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of these must become a witness with us to his resurrection.”

THEOLOGY

- They were repeatedly amazed whenever Jesus performed a miracle.
- They dozed off in the Garden of Gethsemane in spite of Jesus' repeated appeals that they remain awake.
- Peter repeatedly denied that he knew Jesus.
- They all abandoned Jesus as the crucifixion approached, and fled back to safety in Galilee.

Passages related to Judas in the Gospel of Mark: Writing about 70 CE (according to most liberal theologians) or circa 60 CE ([according to many conservative theologians](#)) the author of Mark wrote from a Gentile, Pauline Christian viewpoint. He portrayed Jesus' disciples, who were all Jews, in a very unflattering light:

The FIRST challenge is then how DO WE deal with OUR own betrayal of J/C especially in this post-modern society filled with our greater dependence of Materialism, and our lesser dependence of J/C...when what we have, and achieved is ascribed to our own cleverness, and our own ability ... without noting our ACTUAL UTTER DEPENDANCE ON God.

Then we too are involved in an AFFAIR... OF BETRAYAL OF THE HEART.

This clear sign by Jesus that he embraces this act of darkness- in order to know it –and in knowing it can overcome it- this powerful picture means that the enemies of J/C are not only the Pharisees, Chief Priests, Roman Authorities, but the people who actually walk with him...his own people.

So Judas, becomes a thorn in the flesh...this parable displays the eternal love of God- God Chooses- God gives life ...even for those who would betray him

THAT IS LOVES EXPENSE! (That is the answer to why does J/C choose Judas)

Secondly why does Judas betray Jesus?

The gospel writers open up a number of possibilities as how they may speak about God & the world- the human condition- to us today.

First was the greed- the Gospel says, “ They weighed out 30 pieces of silver”, & from that moment he began to look for an opportunity to betray J/C (26:15-66)

This is the Location for an unwritten warning for the church – as somehow Judas' love of money takes the place of his love for J/C, to the point where it is incompatible.

ALL THIS despite J/C teaching ...recall the sermon o the mount (Matt 5) “*Do not store up for yourselves treasure on earth whir moth & rust destroy & where thieves break in & steal, but store up treasure in your heart, where neither moth & rust can touch, and thieves cannot steal...because for where your treasure is there will your heart be also*”

This greed is not only greed of money, it also does a couple of things

(1) production of greed of power

-(2) perverts the intrinsic sense of identity - from being a matter of who we belong to ...to being a matter of what we belong to ...and what belongs to me

(3) having a progression like a flow chart – that weeps its way into ordinary living situations- of

(a) not being there for one another, at times we really need to be there

(b) the great I am ideology – being Its always ME FIRST

(c) IT FOSTERS SEPERATISM - (*the old S/S school ideal logy of You in your small corner & I in mine*)

When we refuse then to share our lives with one another then, Yes we could be acting like Judas- simply because we deny each other that special acts of love and community which Jesus through the Trinity showed us.

When we fail to recognise our responsibility towards to aged, our families, again we make ourselves open to the devilish ways of Judas.

IT APPEARS THEN it's not simply the stealing of money - it's the abuse of special friendships- it's the hurtful, & causing disunity within the fellowships.

Could it also express to us a strong reminder that as Christians we remain vigilant of the satanic powers of darkness in the world. We need to be reminded of the constant fight between good & evil, between the light & the darkness. We are also taught that if we allow ourselves to slip into those lifestyles of greed for power, then the reality could be compounded into something sinister.... and suffering and untold hurt could erupt.

Jesus gives us “take home” material in his words “stay awake, all of you that you may be spared the test ...

Firstly

Jesus himself prayed for you, & me so that we may be protected, for all harm, from the evil one. **In John’ gospel 17** he ends his prayer that we may have unity amongst ourselves I encourage you to read this prayer

Secondly

The other prayer that Jesus gave his disciples ...The Lord’s Prayer ...it is Powerful, it is of God, as a practical way ...**as a weapon to fight the evil one,**

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, which art in heaven,Hallowed be thy Name.
Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth,
As it is in heaven.Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,As we forgive them that trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, The power, and the glory,
For ever and ever.
Amen.

The Bible presents a consistent picture of how sin and deception are related

What’s revealed is that the way we tend to think of deceit is, well, a bit deceived. Spiritually speaking, deception is deeper than merely being tricked or lied to. In order to be saved, one does not need any particular level of intelligence, philosophical ability, or wisdom (Galatians 3:28; 1 Corinthians 1:20, 26). In fact, mankind has an unfortunate habit of using increased knowledge to develop more sophisticated ways to sin.

Key to understanding spiritual deception is the fact that we often choose what we want to believe rather than what we should believe, even in the face of the evidence (Luke 16:31). “Even after Jesus had done all these miraculous signs in their presence, they still would not believe in him” (John 12:37). Notice that they would not believe Jesus, despite the miracles. Their unbelief was wilful.

Eve is the earliest, clearest example of how spiritual deception really works. When the serpent asks her, “Did God really say...,” Eve responds by quoting what God had said (Genesis 3:1-3). She knows what to do and what not to do. The serpent then tempts her with what she can gain by eating from the tree (Genesis 3:4-5), and she notices other attractive aspects of the fruit (Genesis 3:6). Eve was lied to, and the serpent was cunning (2 Corinthians 11:3), but she ultimately chose to disobey God, even though she could quote the commandment.

This Biblical revelation imparts the trauma of denial as Peters story unfolds ...it is the story that has constantly been in the forefront of the minds of many South AFRICANS that reminded us of the GREAT EVIL OF DENIALS that Apartheid afflicted upon all of us .it is a story that call us to remembrance of ubuntu...In Jesus ...

It is a story that teaches us about the pain, and the trauma of denying our families, our Parents/ our Children, / our Brothers & sis Uncles /Aunts, AND OUR FRIENDS ...

.....But it’s also a story of how to fix up the wrongs ...with God, and with each other.
So the words of the Prayer book ring true ...

“I will arise and go to my Father and say Father I have sinned against you and against the company of heaven, and am no longer worthy to be called your son, But you are faithful, slow to anger and of great mercy. So God is faithful and just and will forgive the penitent
So Have mercy on us Lord and in your great goodness, let the rays of sunshine filter once more into our hearts , filling it with the abundance of Joy, and Love – FOR WE WILL LABOUR ON toward Easter.

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LENT 3- Love's labour's lost – Simon Peter



Matthew 16

Peter's Confession of Christ

...17And Jesus said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. 18"I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it. 19"I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven."...

Mark 14:66-72

⁶³ Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "Why do we still need witnesses? ⁶⁴ You have heard his blasphemy! What is your decision?" All of them condemned him as deserving death. ⁶⁵ Some began to spit on him, to blindfold him, and to strike him, saying to him, "Prophecy!" The guards also took him over and beat him.

Peter Denies Jesus

⁶⁶ While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant-girls of the high priest came by. ⁶⁷ When she saw Peter warming himself, she stared at him and said, "You also were with Jesus, the man from Nazareth." ⁶⁸ But he denied it, saying, "I do not know or understand what you are talking about." And he went out into the forecourt.^[k] Then the cock crowed.^[l] ⁶⁹ And the servant-girl, on seeing him, began again to say to the bystanders, "This man is one of them."⁷⁰ But again he denied it. Then after a little while the bystanders again said to Peter, "Certainly you are one of them; for you are a Galilean." ⁷¹ But he began to curse, and he swore an oath, "I do not know this man you are talking about." ⁷² At that moment the cock crowed for the second time. Then Peter remembered that Jesus had said to him, "Before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times." And he broke down and wept.

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The pressure to deny Christ by conforming to worldly values is a much a pressure on the church as it is on the individual believer.

The History of the church is littered with examples of what John Bowker has called “Licensed insanities” where Christ is denied in acts of violence, and oppression. This is the testimony of many black Africans.

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LENT -4 THE POLITICS OF LOVE
PONTIUS PILATE:
John 18:28-19:22

28 Then they took Jesus from Caiaphas to Pilate's headquarters.^[g] It was early in the morning. They themselves did not enter the headquarters,^[h] so as to avoid ritual defilement and to be able to eat the Passover. **29** So Pilate went out to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" **30** They answered, "If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you." **31** Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and judge him according to your law." The Jews replied, "We are not permitted to put anyone to death." **32** (This was to fulfill what Jesus had said when he indicated the kind of death he was to die.)³³ Then Pilate entered the headquarters^[i] again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" **34** Jesus answered, "Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?" **35** Pilate replied, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?" **36** Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here."³⁷ Pilate asked him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice."³⁸ Pilate asked him, "What is truth?"

Jesus Sentenced to Death After he had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, "I find no case against him. **39** But you have a custom that I release someone for you at

the Passover. Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?"⁴⁰ They shouted in reply, "Not this man, but Barabbas!" Now Barabbas was a bandit.

19 Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged.² And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe.³ They kept coming up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and striking him on the face.⁴ Pilate went out again and said to them, "Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no case against him."⁵ So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Here is the man!"⁶ When the chief priests and the police saw him, they shouted, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him; I find no case against him."⁷ The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has claimed to be the Son of God."

⁸ Now when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever.⁹ He entered his headquarters^[a] again and asked Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer.¹⁰ Pilate therefore said to him, "Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you, and power to crucify you?"¹¹ Jesus answered him, "You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above; therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin."¹² From then on Pilate tried to release him, but the Jews cried out, "If you release this man, you are no friend of the emperor. Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against the emperor."

¹³ When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside and sat^[b] on the judge's bench at a place called The Stone Pavement, or in Hebrew^[c] Gabbatha.¹⁴ Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover; and it was about noon. He said to the Jews, "Here is your King!"¹⁵ They cried out, "Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!" Pilate asked them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but the emperor."¹⁶ Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.

The Crucifixion of Jesus

So they took Jesus;¹⁷ and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew^[d] is called Golgotha.¹⁸ There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them.¹⁹ Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, "Jesus of Nazareth,^[e] the King of the Jews."²⁰ Many of the Jews read this inscription, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew,^[f] in Latin, and in Greek.²¹ Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but, 'This man said, I am King of the Jews.'"²² Pilate answered, "What I have written I have written."²³ When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for

each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top.

Thus the political leaders say...this man is performing many signs and wonders, and what action are we taking.... If we let him go on like this then the Roman Government will think we cannot control our people, and our good returns on our Temple tax may disappear, & be taken away...then we will become poor...and we will not be able to be seen, and mix in the right political circles.

En so die enigste manier om hom still te maak is hom dood te maak . Daar is nie n ander uitweg nie --The only way to silence him is to kill him - the voice cannot speak from the grave

So the seeds of violence are sown - If you will recall J/C stand on this - his sharp rebuke at the Disciple who resorted to the sword- & now before Pilate J/C speaks of Kingship which has no place for the *Politics of Violence of force*- John reminds us of this in (18:36)

But can we speak of the Politics of J/C only in terms of what they are not? I think NoThe Gospel allows us to go further than this for if it is not the politics of force, then they are I believe the Politics of Love.

And in a very real sense the Gospel of John is the Gospel of Love (3:16) the relation of the Father to the Son, is one of Love (3:35)
The relation between J/C and his followers is one of Love (14; 21) He even calls them friends & washes their feet.

Archbishop Romero died at the ALTAR in the Cathedral in Latin America while holding up the cup of Bloodhe was murdered violently because he preached a politics of love in a turbulent society...he said *...”they may kill my body but my spirit will arise in the San Salvadoran People.”*

South Africa’s ARCHBISHOP (Emeritus) The Most Rt Revd D.M Tutu was criticized for preaching at the Funeral of Chris Hani.... because it was said Hani was involved in politics...to which the Archbishop replied *...”I am puzzled about which bible people are reading when they suggest religion & politics don’t’ mix.*

Pilate is blind to the dimension when he asks J/C **“Where do you come from”** And it is exactly the right question, for we know where J/C comes from. And this is fundamental to J/C Identity, and Authority ...
.... And this provokes Pilate into a petulant tirade**”Do you refuse to speak to me? ...Surely You know I have the authority to crucify you”**...J/C responds with fearless authority **“ You have no authority over me if it had not been granted you from above “** That phrase **“From above ...is the CRUX.** It signifies the difference between the **POLITICS OF PILATE** and the **POLITICS OF JESUS.** Pilate’s politics are in terms of this world ...Jesus Politics are justified by an ultimate reality of God

The gospel of John & the story of the trial before Pilate bears serious consideration in terms of the relation between Christianity & Politics

That being “Born again” or born from above “ (3:3) is not a matter of escaping from politics, but of empowerment for a different kind of politics. It is not just a matter of individual salvation, but of being transformed for witnesses to the truth. It is not just a matter of private morality, but of public testimony by word and action.

Above all it is a matter of receiving power from God, to engage with the world in the politics of love.

Lent is a good time to take this challenge to heart? It is a time to see truthfully who we are in the story..... So then who are you in this story?

- **Are we the “Jews” in our complicity with the powers that be in suppressing the truth, and silencing those who bear witness to it?**
- **Are we Pilate, in the way we enjoy our positions of privilege & power, and give in to the demands of the crowds, or interests of our own group**
- **Are we able to responds to the ever “NEW COMMANDMENT” which JESUS gives to those who believe in him, that we love one another as he has / loved us**
- **What about the “Politics of Brexit “..is there a lesson to be learnt from SCRIPTURE , Teaching us not so much what we think ,but how we should relate to one another**

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LENT 5

The Household of Love . The Blessed Virgin Mary



LUKE 1 The Birth of Jesus Foretold

²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary.²⁸ And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you."^[b] ²⁹ But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰ The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³² He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³ He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." ³⁴ Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?"^[c] ³⁵ The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born^[d] will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁶ And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. ³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God."³⁸ Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

Mary's Song of Praise

⁴⁶ And Mary^[f] said, "My soul magnifies the Lord,
⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
⁴⁸ for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.
Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;
⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.
⁵⁰ His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.
⁵¹ He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their

hearts.

⁵² He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,
and lifted up the lowly;⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good things,
and sent the rich away empty.

⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy,

⁵⁵ according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

⁵⁶ And Mary remained with her about three months and then returned to her home.

- **Luke 2:21-40: The Naming of Jesus and the Presentation in the Temple**

21 After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

22 When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord

23 (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"),

24 and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

27 Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and, when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law,

28 Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

29 "Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word;

30 for my eyes have seen your salvation,

31 which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

32 a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel."

33 And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him.

34 Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed

35 so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed--and a sword will pierce your own soul too."

- **Luke 2:41-52: The Boy Jesus in the Temple**

41 Now every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover.

42 And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival.

43 When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it.

44 Assuming that he was in the group of travelers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends.

45 When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him.

46 After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions.

47 And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers.

48 When his parents saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, "Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great

anxiety."

49 He said to them, "Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?"

50 But they did not understand what he said to them.

51 Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart.

52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favor.

- **Luke 8:19-21: Jesus' True Relatives; [cf. Matthew 12:46-50; Mark 3:31-35]**

19 Then his mother and his brothers came to him, but they could not reach him because of the crowd.

20 And he was told, "Your Mother and your brothers are standing outside, wanting to see you."

21 But he said to them, "My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it."

- **Luke 11:27-28: True Blessedness**

27 While he was saying this a woman in the crowd raised her voice and said to him, "Blessed is the womb that bore you and the breasts that nursed you!"

28 But he said, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it!"

- **Acts 1:12-14: A Lucan Summary and his Last Mention of Mary**

12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away.

13 When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying, Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James.

14 All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, **including Mary the mother of Jesus**, as well as his brothers.

It should be quite evident that the Gospel of Luke and Acts give us the essential framework for the beginnings of an authentic study of Mary (Mariology). This Gospel is not a mariolatry but a Christ-centered proclamation to Christian believers of all times. Mary, the mother of the Lord, is primarily a believer who has been with Jesus from his conception, to his birth, his infancy, childhood, and manhood. She continues as a believer after his death and is present when Jesus' promise of his Spirit is given at Pentecost. There is no one person who ever had such a close relationship with Jesus in all of these stages of his life and that of his Church. Luke has brought to us the mysteries of joy and those of sorrow through this believer. It is at Pentecost that she enters the mystery of the glory of the Risen Lord who is ever faithful to his promises. It is within this Lucan perspective that any study of Mary should begin for he is the only evangelist who has through his own theological purpose developed this portrait of Mary as a woman of faith who speaks, prays, and listens in the name of her son Jesus.

A Parallel Study of Matthew, Mark, and Luke on Mary and the Relatives of Jesus

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| <p>Matt. 12.46-5046 While he was still speaking to the people, behold, his mother and his brothers stood outside, asking to speak to him.</p> <p>[47 Someone told him, "Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, asking to speak to you."] 48But he replied to the man who told him, "Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?" 49 And stretching out his hand toward his disciples, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! 50 For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother, and sister, and mother."</p> | <p>Mark 3.31-3531 And his mother and his brothers came; and standing out-side they sent to him and called him. 32 And a crowd was sitting about him; and they said to him, "Your mother and your brothers [and your sisters] are outside, asking for you."</p> <p>33 And he replied, "Who are my mother and my brothers?" 34And looking around on those who sat about him, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! 35 Whoever does the will of God is my brother, and sister, and mother."</p> | <p>Luke 8.19-21</p> <p>19 Then his mother and his brothers came to him, but they could not reach him for the crowd. 20 And he was told, "Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, desiring to see you." 21 But he said to them,</p> <p>"My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it."</p> |
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Mary's Challenge

It is to be hoped that the Christian community at least - *the Anglican Communion in particular* will continue to welcome all people, regardless of age, sex or race or class, regardless in fact even of how much or how little they believe...is it not time perhaps, that the Church realizes it is failed to doom, through our persistent answers of no. noand our brilliant excuses for not getting involved,

It is a hope that our 'yes' can help us to be free from the control that we exercise over others, through our stereotypes and prejudices- that people become , wholly dependent on God - can feel healed, accepted, loved, transformed and liberated.

Conclusion with a Homiletical edge

So, we give thanks to God for Mary, who teaches us how to become part of the household of Love .

We thank God that in the **Magnificat** we continue to be challenged about injustice and poverty and we continue to work for a place, to build a community, to allow God

....let God Be**LET IT BE** ...In the most Wonderful , and Beatific, and exalted name of her Son , Emmanuel , The Lord of Life who died , and rose again , co- joined with the Father, empowered by the Holy Spirit , the Magnificent three persons making the Only One true God of the Trinity .

Ps.....McCartney said he had the idea of "Let It Be" after a dream he had about his mother during the tense period surrounding the sessions for [The Beatles](#) (the "White Album"). McCartney explained that his mother—who died of cancer when McCartney was fourteen—was the inspiration for the "Mother Mary" lyric.^{[2][3]} McCartney later said, "It was great to visit with her again. I felt very blessed to have that dream. So that got me writing 'Let It Be'.^{[4][5]} He also said in a later interview about the dream that his mother had told him, "It will be all right, just let it be."^[6]

Another woman, Julian of Norwich (c. 8 November 1342 - c. 1416) was an English [anchoress](#) and an important Christian [mystic](#). Her *Revelations of Divine Love*, written around 139 included this saying

“ All shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well”