

Good Friday. Solemn Commemoration of the Lord's Passion. 29/3/2024.

I like true crime stories. Now, I know they aren't everyone's cup of tea but I like following the investigations and evidence and seeing how it gets put together to make a case. On a series that I've recently been watching a prominent investigator from New York made the following statement; The evidence, rightly interpreted, never lies, but people do, a lot !!

Despite some claims to the contrary that have gained traction in recent years the evidence and witness accounts for the death of Jesus do stack up. His trials, crucifixion and death on the Cross at Golgotha hill, back then just outside the walls of Jerusalem, is beyond reasonable doubt. From multiple sources and eye witnesses we can also be certain that Jesus corpse was taken down from that barren wood late on the Friday afternoon and entombed, with several people noting where he buried.

What matters now is why he was executed and for what Divine purpose? It's our propensity for lying that led to his death; the lying of leaders and their lackeys about what he said and meant; the lying of various Jewish and Roman authorities to achieve their personal and political ends and the lying of many people, even some of his own disciples, in order to quiet their fears and protect their comfort that killed him.

Jesus death is about confronting this lying habit, overcoming once and for all evil and Satan, the father of lies, with the truth and judgement of God. All of these lies, all of this deception that has plagued humanity since the days of Eden, is taken and hung up high on the Cross in Christ. There God's Divine light is shone upon it, shone upon us and on our world for all

to see. On Golgotha, the tree of death made from the dry wood of our deceit and fears receives its judgement in the rich love, mercy and self sacrifice of the Lord who willingly lays down his life for us, his sheep.

St. John early in his gospel tells of a coming grace greater than our sins, of a light that will dawn brighter than our darkness. Jesus death for us and our world's salvation is the the 2nd last act in this story, an act of a love that is greater than our selfishness, of the Lord's trusting faith and surrender that is stronger than our fear and hatred, of the work of God's bright truth that unmask our deceit with forgiveness and compassion.

We are the only religion, the only group in the world in fact, whose identifying symbol is a means of execution and death. We glory in the Cross of Christ because it reveals God's great love, turning the tree of death into on green with life. This is why we're here today. In venerating this symbol of our Christian faith we're venerating the God of love who works in Christ to free us from all that is false. As that New York criminal investigator said, the evidence doesn't lie; all 2000 years of it stacks up.

Silence, reverent and expectant, will end our ceremony this Good Friday, for what's coming tomorrow night and Sunday morning is needed finish this story of our redemption. In doing we'll then be ushered in a whole new book, the one that we're living now and the one that has no ending.