

Reflection from Fr. Colm on Tuesday of Week 11 in Ordinary Time

Audio posted to the Parish Website on Tuesday 16th June 2020

Good morning everybody I hope you're well. Rather strange times we're living in, we're not just dealing with coronavirus but we're dealing with other issues now of race and religion I think as never before and I think it's a healthy conversation despite the outrages we saw in London on Saturday. The one wonderful image of course was the photograph of Patrick Hutchinson, a 49 year old, very fit looking 49 year old I might add, carrying the white protester, whose name we haven't been given but he certainly did not have a very friendly look about him he was in the opposing camp of protesters who were objecting to the presence of Black Lives Matter protesters and as you know from TV screens etc their attitude and their behaviour was quite aggressive, quite hostile.

I'm just mentioning this because today also is the fourth anniversary of the murder of Jo Cox the Yorkshire MP who was also the victim of a race attack albeit by an unhinged individual but certainly that was the motive. So, all of this is part of the cauldron that we find ourselves living in at this point in time. This is unquestionably a time of great change and that's why today's Gospel I find quite relevant in the context of what we're going through.

Jesus talking about praying for your enemies. How do you do that? It's a grace of God I feel that only we can do it by. "*Love your enemies*" in fact He says. The New Testament writers used the word *agape* an obsolete word to which they were able to give a new meaning to refer to the kind of love that moved Jesus. They could have used the word *philia* meaning friendship but this new kind of love, this *agape* was even wider and deeper than friendship. "*Love your enemies*". It is indeed something astonishing that has to be the voice of God and no other, it's as you know, the grace of God that enables us to do this.

James Cook has been mentioned also today as one of these iconic figures whose statue is incurred in Australia, being questioned in relation to historic attitudes towards the aboriginal people and it's in that context I'd like to end today's reflection with a quotation from Thomas Merton. A reflection from Merton. "*Our task now is to learn that if we can voyage to the ends of the earth and find ourselves in the aborigine who most differs from ourselves, we will have made a fruitful pilgrimage. This is why pilgrimage is necessary, in some shape or other. Mere sitting*

at home and meditating on the divine presence is not enough for our time. We have to come to the end of a long journey and see that the stranger we meet there is no other than ourselves which is the same as saying we find Christ in him or her." Lovely. Good morning everybody.