

## Easter 2, 12/4/2015, Holy Trinity

## John 20:19-31

This Easter has been a time of suffering for many Christians throughout the world.

The news leading up to Easter has been dominated by the killing of Christians, last week it was the university students in Kenya and Coptic Christians in Libya in February, and yet others in Syria and Iraq.

These killings have been made by Islamic State militants who are determined to drive out those of other religious faiths including other Muslims who do not agree with their extreme interpretation of Islam.

This is the present state in which we find ourselves where people express openly anti-Christian sentiments, along with violence day by day and disquiet throughout the world.

The people for whom the Four Gospels were written originally lived in a world of persecution, violence and disquiet throughout their world.

Yet the message of the Gospels was the same for them as it is for us to-day.

Let us go back to the events of Good Friday or as Fr. Brian spoke of it on that day "God Friday".

In the trial and death of Jesus, we have God crucified, in which God declares himself as being in a moment of isolation and helplessness and who identifies himself with every person who finds her/himself without anchor, in isolation with a feeling of helplessness and hopelessness.

This is not you or I or any other good person alive or dead.

This is the crucified God who identifies with every living soul on this planet.

Now we come to Eastertide, the mystery of the resurrection.

In the mysterious event of the empty tomb followed by the events of that night about we read in the first part of this morning's Gospel reading, we have God saying "That was not the end; I am alive in Jesus."

This is not some bland religious saying to bolster us when we think of the present day martyrs with whom I started.

This is frightening stuff because after the appearance of Jesus to the disciples who were cowering behind locked doors, Jesus says, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you."

This is into the world that crucified Jesus to tell of the love of God for all people and to help bring them into a loving relationship with God.

But they were not left alone to do this.

Jesus "breathed on them and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit'".

Now I want to go to the end of to-day's Gospel reading in which John writes that it is impossible to write all the things that Jesus did because the world would not be able to contain it.

What Jesus did and does has no end, certainly not in the pages of a book.

There will always be new readers and new people as a result of our witness.

These are the people in whom Jesus will work making known the love, acceptance, forgiveness and vulnerability of the crucified God who has risen to new life in Jesus of Nazareth.

It is for us to decide whether we participate in the process of spreading the word of the resurrection that frightened the early disciples, including Thomas who required the physical evidence before he could proclaim, "My Lord and my God".

But remember that Jesus has breathed on you and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit".