Reflection for Wednesday in Holy week.

*Love as he Loves*

Jesus only ever gives his disciples one commandment: the commandment to love as he loves. Totally, absolutely. We are not just called, but commanded, to be people known for their love.

The Easter narrative also teaches us that as followers of Jesus, we are to be known both as people who love even to death, and as people who know how to live deeply: through and beyond our times of darkness, into hope. Even in the midst of his impending arrest and death, Jesus assures his followers that they should not be anxious for they follow a faithful and loving God who will never leave them bereft.

Like Jesus’ followers, we often do not understand what God is doing in our lives and world. We struggle to understand how some events such as a global pandemic, could have any meaning or result in anything good. Sometimes as we wait on God, we begin to see how God might be working for good even in the midst of dark and confusing events, but not always. Sometimes the dark seems too dark. But Jesus assures us that God speaks both love and peace into these our darkest experiences.

We cannot deny the reality of the darkness of human existence, nor claim that destructive and hurtful human choices are okay. But John’s Gospel sees the death of Jesus in the light of the resurrection and the demonstration of the depth of God’s love for the world.

It is this profound love of God that Jesus made known to his followers and that the Holy Spirit continues to offer to us. God’s Spirit assures us that we are never abandoned, even in the midst of the loss, pain, and sorrow that are part of human life and that God’s peace can profoundly shape our lives. Within this peace we know ourselves to be loved and are therefore able to love the other and to live fully into hope, as we should. Our prayer might be:

- Yes there is panic buying.
- But there does not have to be meanness.
- Yes there is sickness.
- But there does not have to be disease of the soul
- Yes there is even death.
- But there can always be a rebirth of love.*

(*Brother Richard Hendrick, a Capuchin Franciscan, quoted by Julia Baird, SMH.*)