

“This world does not need another fairy tale,” Episcopal Church Presiding Bishop and Primate Michael Curry said in his Easter Message last year. But he reassured his listeners when he continued - “This week’s story of crucifixion and resurrection is not a fairy tale.”

I was reminded of these words especially this week, amidst the terrible news from Egypt, of the targeting of Coptic Christians in their celebration of Palm Sunday. I was reassured by these words as I sat in fear listening to the bluster and the rhetoric of North Korean and American leaders, speaking of nuclear strikes as though they were just another tactic in their arsenal. And on a far more personal level I was comforted by these words as I wrestled with the uncertainty of health concerns within my family.

No, the world does not need another glib, “she’ll be right” platitude. But what the world does need is to hear again (or perhaps, for some, for the first time) the promise contained within the events of Holy Week and Easter – the reminder that even as we gather in the shadow of the cross, and live our lives in the shadow of so many disasters and injustices, and concerns, that all of these have not only been experienced by our God (in the person of Jesus Christ), but also been overcome.

C.S. Lewis once famously proclaimed of God’s ultimate act at Easter “The war is already won – all that remains are the mopping up exercises”. It seems to me that this mopping up is taking a very long time! But we cannot lose sight of the fact that this is the truth we proclaim, and the truth we live out in our lives as Christians.

When Jesus was executed, for crimes he did not commit, he willingly gave his life. Not for himself, but for others (others, whom Paul reminded the Church in Rome, who were “still sinners”). In this act we are truly shown what love looks like. But to his followers it appeared that all was lost. I suspect they believed that might had indeed overpowered love; that the authorities had succeeded in quashing the Jesus movement.

But God had the final word – the word that said “**no**” – “no” to injustice; “no” to pain; “no” to military muscle; “no”, even to death. That is the reality (not the fairy tale) that we celebrate today. That is the reassurance given to the first believers, which inspired them so much that they spread this Gospel (literally “Good News”) to the farthest bounds of their known world. Tell the story, my friends – tell the truth of what it is we celebrate today – “Christ is Risen – Alleluia”!

May the Risen Christ and all the Saints walk with you this joyful Eastertide...

*Sam*