

Good Friday 2021

"Why on earth do you call it 'Good Friday'?", my atheist friend demands one day.

"What's possibly 'good' about this day?"

I suppose that's a question we each of us have asked, if not out loud, then perhaps in the quiet of our own wondering.

What is "good" about suffering, pain, and death?

What indeed.

Until we sit with those hard times that come to just about everyone during the course of a life.

Those taking care of an elderly parent or partner with dementia, dialysis or cancer.

Those who every day awake with chronic illness, physical pain, emotional burn out.

Those who have experienced the bitterness of divorce, or the hollowed-outness that comes when a child dies.

Good Friday is the time of sitting within the empty heart of deep silence.

Where hope seems lost.

Dreams vanish.

Joy seemingly forever extinguished.

Three days in the tomb.

Dead.

Lifeless.

Gone.

Good Friday meets us on our own roads to Calvary.

Good Friday reminds us that even when life delivers its very worst,
God herself walks this road too.

And as lonely as it seems, this road too is pregnant with God.

A God who will not, in the end, disappoint.

A God who reaches – even into the grave.

Good Friday is for:

Those who carry pianos
to the tenth floor
wardrobes and coffins
An old man with a bundle of wood
Who limps beyond the horizon
A woman with a hump of thorns
A madwoman pushing a baby carriage
full of vodka bottles
Good Friday is theirs
For they will all be lifted
like a gull's feather
like a dry leaf

like an eggshell
Or scrap of paper
Blessed are those who carry
for they shall be lifted.

—Anna Kamienska, tran. from the Polish by David Curzon
(modified)

When we come to discover the blessings that flow from pain, and loss, and disappointment, it is then we come to discover how this Friday can be “good.”

May this day be “good” for you.

May the blessings that come from pain be yours this day, and forevermore.

+amen