

Lent Day 22

Saturday March 10, 2018

Reading: John 11:47-57

⁴⁹ Then one of them, named Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, spoke up, “You know nothing at all! ⁵⁰ You do not realize that it is better for you that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish.”

⁵¹ He did not say this on his own, but as high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the Jewish nation, ⁵² and not only for that nation but also for the scattered children of God, to bring them together and make them one.

Reflection

We all like to feel like we are in control of our own lives. We want to have the power to protect ourselves from harm. But there are times when we can see how powerless we really are. Just recently the city I live in, Regina, Saskatchewan, had a huge dumping of snow. It started on a Sunday, continued on Monday, and it kept going on Tuesday. It felt like as fast as you got your driveway cleared it had filled back in right behind you. Doing all that shovelling (although Maeve helped!) felt apocalyptic. I kept thinking, this must be what it felt like with the plagues of Egypt, like it wasn't going to stop. It was a moment of realization that we are small and not really in control. If we had just a couple of more days we would have been in real trouble.

Well, this desire to be in control isn't new to us and the religious leaders were in the same boat. They realized that as Jesus's claim to the king (Messiah) was growing on the minds of the people and being bolstered by the miracles Jesus was doing, eventually a revolution was going to begin. People would get behind Jesus and oppose the power of Rome. The leaders were convinced that the Jesus movement would fail. If Rome showed up to put down an uprising not only would they crush the movement, but they would take away the nation's autonomy that it was allowed. They would not be able to rule themselves, they would have direct Roman rule. This would have been bad for the nation and for the rulers who had some prestige and power. They were afraid because they were losing control on a dangerous situation. So they exercised the little power they actually had. It was time for Jesus to die so the nation could live. What's amazing is that was also God's plan, but not just this nation, Jesus was going to die for all children of God.

Sometimes our lives feel out of control. We feel small and helpless in light of difficult circumstances, but the reality is we need not fear. God is with us. Even if it seems that circumstances are conspiring against us, God is working all things together for his good. Jesus's death as the high priest prophesied, was so we who are God's children might live.

Prayer

Sacrificial lamb, thank you for standing in our place and dying a death so we might live. You have made us your children and we are grateful. Make us one people in you. Amen.