



Catholic Diocese of Geraldton

Bishop of Geraldton W.A.

Easter Message 2019 The Most Rev Michael Morrissey

Last February I had the opportunity to go on a Diocesan Pilgrimage to the Holy Land with many Parishioners from Geraldton, Perth and other people who were seeking a deeper meaning for their lives.

Visiting the Holy Places like the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in the Old City of Jerusalem was wonderful, but also disconcerting. These places are significant for People of Faith, especially during Holy Week. I was a little disconcerted by the crowds of people pushing and shoving to get a better view, or to touch the traditional places, of our Lord's birth, death and resurrection. The noise was constantly present leaving little room for silence. I wanted to travel back to Galilee where it was much more peaceful. Yet Like Jesus, on our pilgrimage, we had to travel to Jerusalem.

This was the reality Jesus faced when he was hauled before the Sanhedrin, Pontius Pilate, Herod and then condemned to death with a loud and unruly crowd all around him. This seems a far cry from the reverence and beauty of our Easter liturgy's celebrated this week in many of our churches from Holy Thursday to Easter Sunday morning.

The 'noise' of life is often a reality of our own lives with so many things happening where we can find ourselves living on the surface reacting to many situations and circumstances. There is a lot of noise and demands made of us. Personal time for reflection is often missing and affects our relationships with each other.

There is an amazing moment during the reading of the Passion, according to Saint Luke on Palm Sunday, of the interaction between Jesus and the criminal as they hang in agony and pain on their crosses. **"Jesus remember me when you come into your kingdom", "Today you will be with me in paradise"**. In the midst of all the crowds pushing and shoving, of anger, betrayal, deep despair and darkness, a bright light of hope shines. God does have victory over all that is negative and this is the message of Easter that comes from the cross itself.

During this Easter in 2019 I pray that there will be those moments and times for quiet reflection where the light will shine for you. We rejoice and give thanks for Jesus Christ who is indeed our Saviour, who remembers us and who scatters the darkness as we live out our lives with joy and hope that Christ is risen!