

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY GOOD FRIDAY 10TH APRIL 2020

Good Morning,

On Desert Island Discs last month Daniel Radcliffe chose a song by Nick Cave, “Into my arms, Oh Lord”. A love song, it begins with the sonorous line “I don’t believe in an interventionist God but I know, Darling, that you do”. That division of belief goes to the heart of the spiritual response to our current crisis of health and wealth.

Some feel there’s no point to asking God for help. “What will be will be”. Others will be on our knees begging God to protect our loved ones and to vanquish the virus.

The Christian faith was born out of a belief in an interventionist God – that the One who made the world would rescue it out of the mire of so much that was now bad.

Although today – Good Friday – feeds this belief it also fuels disbelief. The cry of Jesus from the cross, “My God, why have you forsaken me?” looks like evidence for those who doubt that God has either the will or the power to intervene. If he couldn’t rescue his own child what hope is there for us?

Later on in Nick Cave’s song he concedes, ‘But I believe in Love and I know that you do too.’

Beneath any arguments about whether or not God intervenes there seems to be a universal conviction about the primacy of love. It’s shared by people of all faiths and of none. Kind signs of it are now spreading to surprising places like seeds in the wind blown by the storm of the virus.

Like many people I've prayed to God in difficult times. Last summer our six year old grandson had a tumour removed from his brain and is now undergoing twelve months of therapy. And yes, we are praying for God to intervene.

At such a time philosophical arguments evaporate in the heat of love – love for him, for his family and in the hope that God too loves him with all his heart. That's the love that we cling to in such a crisis. It's the same love that energised the life of Jesus.

At the end of Good Friday after the questioning and the thirsting, after the giving and forgiving, after the promise of paradise and the struggling for breath, and just before he declared that it was 'finished' Jesus sighed, "Into your hands, Oh Lord, I commend my spirit". Into your arms.

It was his last testament to Love which in our present crisis is our best hope.

The Right Reverend James Jones KBE