



Easter Message from Bishop Mary Froiland

Last Sunday we began our Holy Week walk with Jesus as we recounted his entry into Jerusalem. At the same time, bombs were going off in Christian churches in Alexandria, Egypt, not far from where our own Pastor Kirsten Fryer serves (Please continue reading to see her message from Cairo).

We were still absorbing the news of the chemical attacks by the Syrian government and U.S. bombings in retaliation. We have been overwhelmed with news reports of refugees fleeing violence in Syria and Central America, and North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa, reports of violence against LGBTQ people, racial and religious and ethnic discrimination and violence – the list goes on and on, and we risk becoming numb. Will it ever end? Is there another way?

It's Holy Week, and we remember. Year after year we recount the story of the last week of Jesus' human life. We repeat it over and over, again and again, because it shows us another way, but we haven't yet learned its meaning.

Behold your King!

Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem! Lo, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. (Zechariah 9:1a)

In a world of domination and oppression, where kings rule through violence and terror, Jesus embodies God's true vision of "kingship": humility and service.

Behold the Prince of Peace!

He will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the war-horse from Jerusalem; and the battle bow shall be cut off, and he shall command peace to the nations; his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth. (Zechariah 9:1b)

In a world of warfare and subjugation, where leaders seek to divide and conquer, Jesus proclaims God's intent for a world where reconciliation and peace reign.

Behold the King of the Jews!

It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him. The inscription of the charge against him read, "The King of the Jews." (Mar 15:25-26)

In a world of flash and image, where rulers surround themselves with trappings of power and privilege, Jesus, crowned with thorns, is raised on a cross shaped throne to rule in surrender rather than retaliation; in suffering rather than domination.

Behold the Lord of Life!

"Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen."³ (Luke 24:5b)

In a world that continues to be subject to the Powers of Domination and Violence, true life is found in dying to those Powers and living in the God blessed, Jesus demonstrated Way of Love, Humility, Service, Compassion and Peace.

It's Holy Week, and we are blessed to remember the real story. It's Holy Week, and we are privileged to proclaim it. In a world where the Powers of Domination and Violence hold such enormous sway, Jesus reveals another Way. May we live in his Way. May our world come to know the fulfillment of the Reign of God as we unwaveringly proclaim Christ crucified and risen for the sake of the world.

God's Peace,

Mary Froiland
Bishop