

Emergence – A time for Everything Good Friday

Reading John 18-19

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Jose Farmer wrote, 'I've been down so long, it looks like up to me' and that's a little what Good Friday can mean to some people.

We live in a stiff-upper-lip society but honestly, sometimes we can hear a silent scream from the bottom of the well. Good Lord, what else could go wrong!?

Just when there was a flicker of normal, the pandemic hit.

Sometimes life is just like that.

And the one thing the nuns taught me is there is a time for everything.

There is a time when you don't fight it! You sit with it. You grieve.

The Jesus story has hope snatched away just when there is a flicker of a new kingdom ...

Sit with it.

Those who sat and watched Him die – could not imagine **you** – sitting here.

This is the one time of the year where we are in the rip – don't fight it, glide. Because every day has its end. (Ecc1:1-11) What is it telling us? What will we take from it?

Good Friday is a wallow, go for it but don't forget this is not the end. You couldn't dream a bigger story.

If life dumps goo on you – you might make bubbles but that doesn't mean you don't feel sticky.

I remember watching my 2-year-old playing in the back garden. He fell over and hurt himself. I saw him look up towards the house with tears in his eyes and in an instant, you could see his decision that it was too far away to bother. He stopped, inspected at his knee, kissed it better and ran off to play some more. Was that the power of love you carry with you ...the roots of resilience?

John wrote his Gospel still angry. He and his followers had been ejected from the Synagogue. He was dark on those who rejected him. It is hurtful to be rejected for your beliefs. In this reading, he shifts the blame for Jesus' death onto those who rejected him.

Sun Tzu said in *The Art of War*, "the enemy of my enemy is my friend."

John was making friends with the Romans and perhaps hoping that writing an official history shifting blame elsewhere, would gain protection for the growing community. Paying protection money has never worked out well – anywhere, in any century. And it is not what you would call peace. It is a bargain, a wager, a stop gap situation until your ‘defenders’ ask for more, and more or are overrun by their enemies.

Rejection is a hurtful wound and John never made peace. John had a lot more to learn from Jesus.

Peace cannot be imposed – peace imposed is but a thumb in the dike. It is the absence of violence but not fear or distrust.

It is the same as when we try and obliterate our feelings – we just suppress them for another time. They leak out in actions and rationalisations. The danger of John’s anger erupted in antisemitism.

Peace must be grown, nurtured and honoured by acknowledging hurt. We are growing peace with our Aboriginal brothers and sisters. We have much to acknowledge and talk about. We must hear them out.

We could also be growing peace within ourselves. Where is the love that we can transfer to heal our wounds? Listen. Reach for it.
Who knows what can emerge?

Life has its ups and downs –
There is no getting around it, but
don’t forget it is not the end of the story.
In fact, it’s usually the beginning.