

Good Friday 2011.

The journey to the cross must have been hard for his mother and to stand and watch him die must have been agonising, but she stayed there. She continued to believe and there was no loss of faith. We can dare to believe that she held him in prayer.

So what did she make of his curious words to her 'Woman this is your son' and to his beloved disciple John 'This is your mother'?

Perhaps he meant that they were to be a support for each other once Jesus had died. And tradition tells us that this was the case. Yet so many things that Jesus said in John's Gospel had a deeper meaning. Remember the woman of Samaria and her bucket of water which leads Jesus to talk about 'living water'.

St. Paul tells us that by his death on the cross Jesus reconciled all things to himself. He meant that in his suffering and death, Jesus took upon himself the brokenness and division that is part of our experience and that of the world and creation. Brokenness and division in human hearts, between people, between communities, between religions and between nations. Somehow Jesus became that division and brokenness in his death on the cross and destroyed its negative and destructive power.

And as Mary watched the soldier came and pierced his side and out flowed blood and water. That agonising flow was the answer to the question about her relationship with John. This blood and water was a symbol of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit of God the source of all healing, harmony and brokenness. Jesus has taken away that negative and destructive power and brought healing with the divine power of the Spirit who is the source of all unity.

So now Caiaphas' words before Jesus death had come true. Through his death and resurrection Jesus had gathered into one the scattered children of God. He had brought about a new harmony in creation and within humanity so that Mary and the beloved disciple were untied in a new way; in the communion which unites everyone in Christ through the power of the Cross.

We gather this afternoon as people called to model our lives on the Lord's Cross by making the reconciliation, harmony and peace which he brought about by his death a reality in our world, our lives and our relationships.