

Prayer for Peace, Hope and Justice

I don't know about you but I have felt a tension building up in me over the last two weeks as we have been remembering Jesus' determined journey towards Jerusalem for Passover. We know how it ends and maybe because of or in spite of that there is an unavoidable tension within. In experiencing this, I realise that it is a familiar tension...one I have felt often when reading the damning accounts of corruption investigative journalists are exposing and listen to the often serious consequences that whistle blowers face when shining a light on it all. They too, seem to walk daily towards their own Jerusalem.

Let us pray

Jesus you knew more than any other what speaking truth to power entailed. Your days of solitude and temptations in the wilderness had been preparing you. You knew speaking and living the liberating truth of justice, mercy and kindness would awaken the fury of those in power. You also understood that this same truth would awaken hope for those who sat on the edges of society watching the rich get richer and the powerful more powerful. Your excruciating wrestling in the garden on the night before you died held the choice of saving yourself or surrendering to what would be life-giving for all. And it seemed that that wrestling led you to a decision made deep within that set your face like a flint towards the inevitable and that carried you with an extraordinary dignity to the end.

And so we pray for journalists and whistle-blowers in South Africa and throughout the world. We pray, not knowing, not fully grasping, all that speaking the truth must mean for them. We see that they too, carry a dignity that comes from deciding something deep within...something that will be for the good of all... something that comes at massive, massive cost to both them and their families; loss of jobs, isolation, defamation, misrepresentation, hate-mail, night terrors and tragically, for a growing number, even death. And the law seems to fail them with series of lengthy postponements, leaving them cash-strapped and dangerously vulnerable to reprisals. Some have to flee homes, countries, families to start again ... so much loss.

We can't know how to pray...but what we can do is honour them before you...you who know and understand. We can honour them for their wrestling. We can honour them for those decisions made deep within to stand by truth no matter what. We can honour them by remembering them and committing to speak truth to all lies and corruption both within and outside of ourselves.

Please will you stand as we take a minute of silence to honour these very courageous champions of truth. We will then close with the prayer for Africa.

God bless Africa and all the world, Guard our children, Guide our leaders, And give us peace.