

Clincarthill Parish Church – Lent Reflection 5 – Week beginning Sunday, 10th March 2024

Bible Reading – Romans 8: 31b – 39

With God on our side like this, how can we lose? If God didn't hesitate to put everything on the line for us, embracing our condition and exposing himself to the worst by sending his own Son, is there anything else he wouldn't gladly and freely do for us? And who would dare tangle with God by messing with one of God's chosen? Who would dare even to point a finger? The One who died for us—who was raised to life for us! — is in the presence of God at this very moment sticking up for us. Do you think anyone is going to be able to drive a wedge between us and Christ's love for us? There is no way! Not trouble, not hard times, not hatred, not hunger, not homelessness, not bullying threats, not backstabbing, not even the worst sins listed in Scripture:

They kill us in cold blood because they hate you.
We're sitting ducks; they pick us off one by one.

None of this fazes us because Jesus loves us. I'm absolutely convinced that nothing—nothing living or dead, angelic or demonic, today or tomorrow, high or low, thinkable or unthinkable—absolutely *nothing* can get between us and God's love because of the way that Jesus our Master has embraced us. (*The Message*)

This passage is a very familiar one, but it's worth reading it in a different version so there can, perhaps, be another way to understand what's being said.

It may feel strange to read it with such everyday language and yet there is something very profound as well.

As much as Paul has written these words there is an opportunity to imagine them being said by Jesus, confirmation of all that He has said, done and promised through His ministry.

With that in mind, perhaps you can imagine Jesus speaking to you as one friend to another. Perhaps you find there are new truths for the context you live in or encounter in the everyday. Whatever it brings out for you, one thing is certain, Jesus will have heard it before, down through the ages by many just like you.

Points for Reflection

As you reflect on this passage what words or phrases draw you to ponder a bit longer?

Is there something in particular you haven't noticed before, if so, ponder it, ask Jesus to shed His light on your pondering. Is there something you need to say to Jesus?

As Easter approaches, we move towards joyful celebration of the Resurrection of our Lord and Master. Does this reading enable you to see Jesus more clearly, to follow Him more closely and to love Him even more?

Prayer:

Lord Jesus, You poured out yourself for me with such great love through the pain of the Cross so I could learn to be confident You are always with me no matter what life brings. Thank You for the knowledge in Your Word which reminds me You are there at the right hand of God interceding for me in all things. Amen.