

## Meditation Tuesday in Holy Week

Can I let you in on a secret? I can't swim!

I haven't been in a swimming pool since school days, and that, I can tell you, was a hellish experience every time. I've never been in the sea; I've dipped my toes in the water a few times, but that's as far as it has gone. Going to the Great Barrier Reef a few years ago, I watched most of the people on the boat trip jump in the water, I just looked at the coral and amazing sea life through the glass bottom of the boat. What a missed opportunity. The same thing happened at the Dead Sea, there were the others floating on the surface whilst I just watched on.

I feel I am missing out on something, yet the fear of deep water prevents me from taking the plunge. Many of us have a fear of something, maybe a fear of a number of things, I know I have other phobias. Maybe it's a fear of flying, of heights, whatever it maybe it can hamper our lives, we'll never know the sense of freedom of, say, sky diving or bungee jumping!!

How do we overcome our fear? Perhaps we don't want to. Is it a matter of trust? Many of us will have played trust game in our earlier years. Of standing in the middle of a circle with our eyes closed and being told to fall backwards, hopefully to be caught by one or more of the people in the circle. It's about letting go and trusting that you will be caught and not fall to the ground. 'Is it worth taking the risk?', we might ask ourselves. 'Aren't we happy as we are?'

The story of the Passion is of Jesus being prepared to take the ultimate risk. He knew that for the future of the world He had to do this, only by going through suffering and death could the powers of evil be defeated. It wasn't easy for him. After the Last Supper he and the disciples went to Gethsemane. Jesus prayed: "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." Matthew 26:39-40.

This is a reference back to the cup of Yahweh's wrath as mentioned in Isaiah, Jeremiah and in several other places in the Old Testament. These passages talk of what happens when 'God, grieving over the terrible wickedness of the world, steps in to give the violent and blood thirsty, the arrogant and the oppressors, the reward for their ways and deeds.' Jesus is being asked by His Father to be the sacrificial victim. 'O Lamb of God that takest away the sins of the world.'

This is what Jesus was prepared to do for us. He asks His disciples; 'Are you able to drink the cup that I am to drink?' At the moment of testing will we be like the disciples who sneak away. Or like Peter who denies him three times? Or do we conquer our fears and boldly stand up for the Gospel?

Christ Jesus,  
whose glory was poured out like perfume,  
and who chose for our sake  
to take the form of a slave:  
may we also pour out our love  
with holy extravagance,  
that our lives may be fragrant with you. Amen.