

Sunday Thought

23rd August 2020 21st in Ordinary Time

Readings

Exodus 1:8 to 2:10

Psalms 124

Romans 12: 1 – 8

Matthew 16: 13 – 20



The Main Story

Covid 19 has turned life up-side-down in many ways:

Families have been bereaved

Poverty and hunger have been increased with foodbanks busier than ever, endless queues for food in India, and worse. Isolation has brought loneliness, fearful anxieties, abuse in families and the general disturbance of daily life. Many thousands face an uncertain future of unemployment and loss of income

Up-side-down? But was life already downside-up? Has the pandemic encouraged many of us to discover ways to get it the right way up again? The last months have produced so many great stories of neighbourliness, kindness, self-sacrifice, goodwill, awareness of other people's needs and the plight of the homeless! There have been many incidences of people asking the usual question, *Where is God in all this?* while others have discovered renewed faith in God and love for their neighbours.

I wonder if in time we shall look back and be amazed to discover the Main Story in all this?

That thought struck me while reading today's scripture from Exodus. It's the story of a cruel potentate reducing an enslaved, alien race to poverty for fear of them gaining power and inciting rebellion.

Was that really the main story? Or was it about a boy-child adopted by a princess, being enabled to become the leader of the rebellion – with God?

The Romans 12 reading asks a similar question. Is worship in the Temple for the glory of that edifice or for the transformation of worshippers lives in the acts of prayer and praise?

In the Gospel reading too (Matthew 16) Jesus makes clear that the Kingdom of God – a whole new world of peace, love and justice - begins when the main story is about a handful of people confessing their faith in Him to bring about a whole new world!

A Prayer

Lord, help me to see for myself, my church and the world that when life is disturbed below the surface, the main story may be in the small print about you and your Kingdom work.