



The Church of England
in Essex and East London
Diocese of Chelmsford

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HOLY WEEK AND EASTER 2018

A message from the Bishop of Barking

To all clergy and lay leaders in the Barking Episcopal Area

Dear sisters and brothers,

I write this as we begin Holy Week. A verse from this morning's Old Testament reading has stuck with me as I begin the journey: *Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by? Look and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow, which was brought upon me, which the Lord inflicted on the day of his fierce anger.* Lamentations 1:12

In context this verse speaks of the desolation of Jerusalem after the Babylonian Exile. God has seemingly abandoned his people, his city and his temple. For many in our Christian era this verse has seemed to speak also, mysteriously and prophetically, of Jesus' desolation on the cross out of love for us all.

Like me, you will have passed this way and made the Holy Week journey many times before. For us who are in the business of ministry, teaching and presiding this week, it is so easy to concentrate so much on that ministry and service that we miss the Saviour and his love for us. Not deliberately, but accidentally, it can become nothing to us who pass by.

My determination this week is to '*look and see,*' to linger, and not to pass by the Saviour who loves me and gave all for me. At this moment I am not clear how to do that, but I am determined to try. I encourage you to do the same in the midst of such a busy and demanding time.

As you walk the way of the cross, may I thank you all once again for your leadership and sacrificial ministry in and to our parishes, networks and communities across the Barking Episcopal Area. In the midst of much demand, challenge and Gospel opportunity, it remains a total privilege to be your local bishop.

Later in Lamentations, the hope of the writer returns, especially in the middle of chapter 3. It is based on the truth that *the steadfast love of the Lord never ceases. (3:22).* Above all, our hope rest on nothing less than the mighty resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ on Easter Day.

I pray God's richest blessing on you as you walk the Way of the Cross this Holy Week and that together we might celebrate the mighty resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ on Easter Day and beyond.

+Peter

DON'T FORGET

Barking Clergy and Leaders Study Day

ROWAN WILLIAMS - DISCIPLESHIP IN OUR CURRENT SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CONTEXT

St Mary's Loughton Tuesday 8 May, 2018 10am – 4pm Booking details to follow



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