**THOUGHT FOR THE DAY**

**WEEK BEGINNING 26th MARCH 2018**

**KEY WORDS FOR CONSIDERATION: EASTER; CRUCIFIXION; RESURRECTION; REDEMPTION; SACRIFICE**

**PRAYER:** TO BE SAID EACH DAY:

Lord, help me to free myself from the grudges that I hold.

Amen.

1. **‘Pilate said to the people ‘Here is your king!’ They shouted back, ‘Kill him! Kill him! Crucify him!’ So they took charge of Jesus. He went out, carrying his cross, and came to ‘The place of the Skull’, as it is called. There they crucified him; and they also crucified two other men, one on each side, with Jesus between them.’**

**John 19: 14-18**

Crucifixion is a particularly painful form of execution, where the victim slowly suffocates to death while their body is suffering the pain and agony of the nails. We would expect the victim to be concerned only with their own suffering at this time and we would expect them to cry out in pain. But the workds we hear fom Jesus are, ‘Forgive them, Father! They don’t know what they are doing.’ He was asking God to forgive the people causing his suffering.

It is not an easy thing to forgive someone who has hurt or upset us. Often we hold grudges for years remembering the hurt. Jesus was remarkable in that he was forgiving. For everybody this is an example to follow.

Can you forgive and forget?

1. **And Peter kept saying insistently, ‘Even if I have to die with you, I will not deny you.’**

**Mark 14:31**

There is a song that says ‘When the going gets tough, the tough get going’, but this really depends on the toughness of the situation.

Most of us have witnessed or have been a part of a situation where members of a group turn on one individual. This is when we expect our friends to support us, but they are often frightened that they too will be turned upon, so they keep quiet, or even deny being our friend.

In this reading, we see Peter, a friend of Jesus, who says that he is willing to die for him. But he does not keep his work and when Jesus is arrested he says that he does not know him. It is not the end of the friendship though as Jesus recognises the weakness of Peter, forgives his behaviour and still accepts him as a friend.

Could you forgive a friend who let you down?

1. **‘The members of the council were amazed to see how bold Peter and John were and to learn that they were ordinary men of no education. They realised then that they had been companions of Jesus. So they called them back and told them that on no condition were they to speak or to teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered them, ‘You yourselves judge which is right in God’s sight – to obey you or to obey God.’**

**Acts 4: 13**

So here we have ‘wimpy’ Peter who previously denied even knowing Jesus, now amazing people with his boldness. Before the crucifixion he denied knowing Jesus to a servant girl, now after the resurrection (rising from the dead), he tells the council (the leaders of the people) that he cannot stop speaking about what he has seen and heard.

The experience of Easter has turned Peter from a frightened man into a fearless preacher.

Have you ever had an experience which has changed you attitude to something or someone?