

Worship for all Easter Day sermon for the congregation of All Saints, Boyne Hill 12th April, 2020

One of the enjoyable parts of ministry at All Saints has been the use of film at different times and occasions. Mike & Jan Moss host every other month, film night at their home and we have enjoyed some great entertainment with a cinema experience with the film beamed onto the wall of their living room. Pop corn and wine has been shared and thoughtful conversations taken place.

In 2012 that wonderful year of the Olympic games in London encouraged those of us at All Saints to look at sporting films that challenge us. The film about the rugby World cup in South Africa about Mandela's call for solidarity and unity of his country in 'Invictus' stands out for me.

Assemblies at Altwood school have enabled me to use a film clip to highlight a theme to open the assembly. Examples include Paddington (film one) and the welcome (Or not) of the famous bear on arrival at Paddington station. What welcome do we offer in society and in our churches? Another example would include 'Billy Elliot' and the question posed to the young ballet dancer – what does it feel like when you dance? He replies 'Electricity'. I have used that endless times to talk about God's grace and Holy Spirit at work in us.

The Friday night youth club that ran at the vicarage for 3-4 years covered a wide range of films. Perhaps one of the best as an experience and for discussion with the young people was 'Inside Out' the film that poses the question, 'Do you ever look at someone and wonder what's going on inside their head?'

It is this film that I used as my Easter sermon on April 1st 2018. Just like those of us who have only Free View Television you are going to get a repeat for 2020. However, I will try in this talk to adapt for the needs of today.

As you will know I have been asking you during my blog to think about the inner spiritual journey. We are not able to come together as community in a physical sense, so we need to journey internally. 'Inside out' takes an imaginative journey into the mind of 11 year old Riley where we find five emotions are hard at work, led by light hearted Joy. Joy strives to make sure that she functions alongside fellow emotions Fear, Anger, Disgust and Sadness to make sure Riley stays happy or at least stable in her view on life. One of the key parts of our journey through COVID 19 is maintaining our mental health and that is a key issue of the film.

Let's set the scene then. Riley is a very happy young girl with lots of friends, good at sport and enjoying the comfortable life of the Mid West of the USA. Suddenly, her life is thrown upside down (We all know that experience at this time) as she with her family move to the big city of San Francisco. The five characters inside her mind, sadness the little girl with glasses, disgust with arched eyebrows, fear the highly strung purple character, anger the red character with fire coming out of his head! Oh, and Joy with her beautiful looks and beaming smile.

The emotions and feelings kick in quickly as Riley moves home. Fear of moving to a new school, anger with her parents for moving them, disgust as she sees a mouse in her new home and deplores the behaviour of her class- mates and sadness as she misses her old life. Over the story Riley is desperate to find her joyful self again. We the viewer are drawn into the story as sadness, fear, anger and disgust meets with joy.

This Holy Week perhaps we feel those emotions. Anger at things happening in our world. Loss of jobs and selfish shopping. Viewing a nurse who has worked for 48 hours unable to find food. Disgust at those refusing to keep social distancing or at the germs that can impact upon our well being. Fear for our jobs, our homes, our security, our lives and the lives of those we love being

lost. Sadness for the many families who have lost loved ones here and across the world. What joy then?

We have made our pilgrim journey from Palm Sunday and the crowds. Some angry with Jesus, some fearful of him, some excited by him even though they may not understand him. Jesus perhaps felt sadness as people fail to understand him!

Maundy Thursday we find some sense of joy at Passover, at simply sharing a meal, sadness that this might be the last meal and that our hope would leave us. And yes, disgust at washing those feet. And yet this was a sign for us to wash others and my goodness people from this parish alongside parishes across the Church have been doing that.

Good Friday we discover Jesus angry with Peter as he tries to stop his arrest. All of us sad that we feel like Peter in rejecting Jesus at times in our life. Jesus' fear 'Not my will but yours', 'take this cup from me' 'my God, my God why hath thou forsaken me?'

Easter Vigil /Easter Morning – We share with Riley the emotions of sadness meeting with joy. The paschal candle last night is where that takes place. Jesus' love overcoming evil, his light overcoming darkness, his New Life overcoming death.

In Matthew's gospel today Mary Magdalene overcomes fear, and with Mary overcomes sadness and desolation. The angel says to them 'get on your way quickly and tell his disciples, He Is risen from the dead'. 'The women, full of joy, lost no time in leaving the tomb to tell the disciples.'

So then my friends, recalling our baptismal promises, we go forth to channel God's love, to walk in God's light, to rejoice in God's love and to reflect God's glory.

In the name of the Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit.

Amen.