



April 1, 2015

Dear Mission Personnel,

I will make a confession, I pretty much skipped Lent this year. I had opportunities to engage if I wanted to, but really, I just didn't have the energy to really engage and embrace the season this year. I am going to blame a lot of this on having a newborn baby and that my mind isn't as fully present and centered on my spiritual journey right now. Most of my praying and reflection is centered on the prayer – "Please God, make them go to sleep soon." ;- ) I am kidding, I think.

Seriously though, sometimes it feels like Lent is just too hard. Good Friday is too hard. Being reminded of the dark, terrible end of Jesus is too difficult to reflect on when there is so much sorrow and heartache in the news and in front of our faces everyday. Sometimes it feels like we are living Good Friday every day, so being reflective during Lent can feel very difficult.

It is easy to imagine the women standing at a distance, watching Jesus breathe his last breath, surround us. We don't have to listen very hard to hear their cries all around us as we see mothers care for suffering or hurt children.

We can easily visualize the government officials who were participants in the death of an innocent person. We see this almost every day in the news when the people we have trusted with great power are abusing that authority and hurting members of our community.

We can close our eyes and see the people who are mocking Jesus, challenging him to come down off the cross if he really is the Son of God. We see little love, compassion, forgiveness or grace shared amongst those around us as they are being bullied with personal attacks.

Sometimes it feels like the world around us is stuck in Good Friday, where everything feels lost and hopeless.

But then I remember, we are not Good Friday people, we are Easter people! Our faith tells us that the world is different than what we see at first sight. Jesus' ministry tells us that there is something else going on that is contrary to the dominant narrative that we often see reflected. Jesus' work on the cross was done, but the work of Jesus is not finished. It has been handed over to each of us to carry on. We are Easter People because we believe in the Resurrection and the redemption that comes with it. And that gives me hope. Not because I believe that the work of Jesus' love, justice and solidarity will be completed in my lifetime, but because I know that it will be completed. It will be completed because our faith in Christ tells us so.

In Christ,

*Ben Albers*

