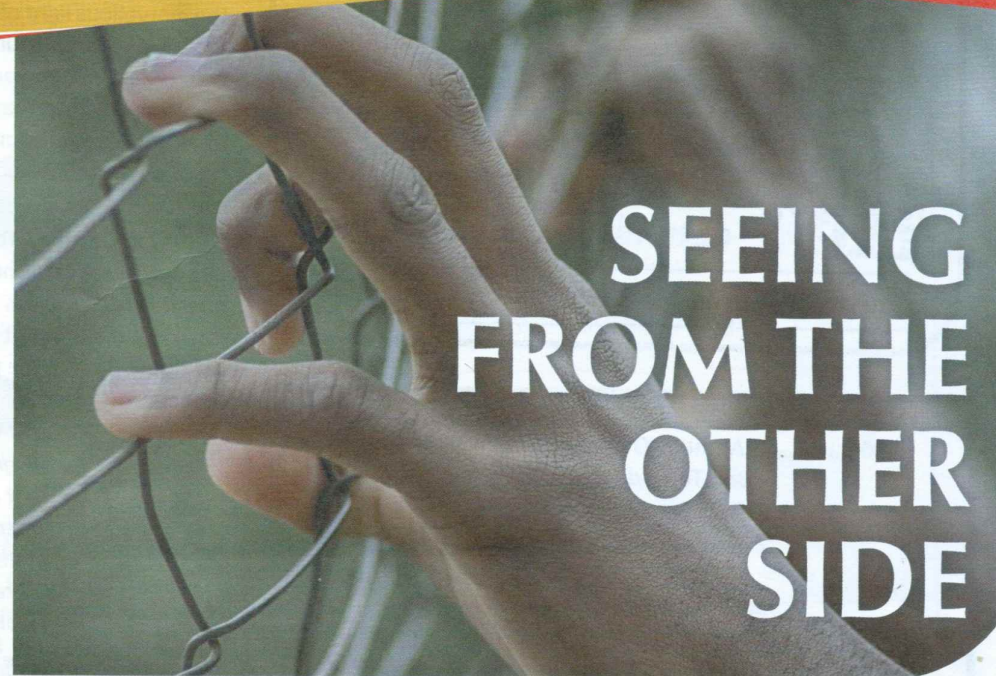




Seeing the Gospel present Jesus before Pilate, and thinking of the recent Prisoners Sunday (first Sunday of November), made me reflect on matters penal. As I write, there are 5,700 people imprisoned in fourteen Irish Prison, with an over capacity of around 111%, on average. We are not doing well in penal reform and any party that flags a 'lock-them-up-and-throw-away-the-key' policy to potential voters is guaranteed to garner votes. In the Church, Prisoner Sunday is probably the most under-celebrated Liturgy of the year, with a polite Prayer of the Faithful (at best) being offered. Prisoners don't really come in for much consideration, if truth be told – and sometimes, that is understandable. However, it's the ongoing judgement that leads to difficulties in seeking accommodation and work placement that can lead to a vicious cycle of reoffending, despite a Probation Service that tries its very best to address that risk.

To the outside eye, Jesus was just another criminal dragged before the Roman authority of Pilate. His family were of little consideration. But it's worth remembering – as we run things along the straight lines of this world – that his Kingdom is not of this world. And we should thank God for that! Judging a

and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil, ...
**For the kingdom,
the power and the glory are yours
now and for ever.**
Lord Jesus Christ, ... **Amen.**
The peace of the Lord be with you always.
And with your spirit.
Lamb of God, you take away the sins ...
Behold the Lamb of God, ...
Lord, I am not worthy



SEEING FROM THE OTHER SIDE

person does not define who they are, but it defines who *you* are. Judging a person on the word of another is fraught with danger. It's why it is so important in law to deal with evidence.

But in the person of Christ, you have complete truth. To see this, you need to have truth already alive in your heart. For truth can only be seen by those with truth in them. Sometimes hatred blinds people to what is right and beautiful. We've all seen people pilloried by their accusers because they would not support a person that was in the wrong – or because they stood up for something that was right.

We should let God be God and not try to reduce his Kingdom to this

world. We are too worldly, and we don't think, understand or try to speak as Jesus would wish. We somehow cannot think beyond this way of living, this life. Jesus took on our human flesh and knows things from our perspective. It would be nice if we could see things and people a little more from the Divine – the Loving Father who forgives prodigally, the Good Shepherd who guides and protects his flock. Jesus constantly sees people as people and values and respects us in our imperfection. It is what the Kingdom is about.

– Tom Cox

Reflection

In which ways does Jesus exercise his kingship in your life?

Lesson

Jesus is the beginning and the end, the one who is intertwined with everything we do and think and with every moment of our being.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, help me to accept your rule in every corner of my life. May I have in me the same values and outlook as are in you. Amen.

that you should enter under my roof,
but only say the word
and my soul shall be healed.
Communion Antiphon (Ps 28:10-11)
The Lord sits as King for ever.
The Lord will bless his people with peace.
Prayer after Communion
Having received the food of immortality, we ask,
O Lord, that, glorying in obedience to the
commands of Christ, the King of the universe,
we may live with him eternally in his heavenly
Kingdom.
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**