



Easter!

According to John's Gospel, it was Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus who anointed Jesus at Bethany. She poured costly oil over his feet, and those who watched failed to see the significance of her action until afterwards. We are told that Judas objected on the grounds of wasted money, but the cost of the ointment mirrored the cost of Jesus' life, and the action of pouring it all out, mirrored his action of pouring out all his love upon the cross. The sacrifice of Mary giving up what was precious, was mirrored by Jesus giving up his life. And some thought that Mary was a fool, wasting the ointment by pouring it over Jesus and Jesus was seen to be foolhardy by his followers as he showed his love by going to Jerusalem and ultimately to the cross. And with Easter Day this year being on April Fools' Day it seems a good time to remember that *"The folly of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God stronger than human strength"* (1 Corinthians 1:25)

- What foolishness is this that the God of all creation allows himself to become flesh, to become fully human, and put himself in the hands and at the mercy of cruel and ignorant men and women who fail to recognise his presence.
- What foolishness is this that takes the one who is perfect love, and tries to get rid of him by death.
- What foolishness is it that fails to recognise that God is bigger than any situation we find ourselves in, and that out of what seems to be disaster, we have glimpses of grace and hope.
- And who is it who says "April Fool" to us this Easter, is it us to God for allowing himself to be treated in such an awful way? Or is it God to us who says "If you want to know where to find me – look for where love needs to be and I will there, and you are an April Fool if don't see me in all things."?

That Jesus was prepared to go to Jerusalem and face the trial, the crucifixion, and death for us was sheer folly, the cross was foolishness to the wise, and yet 2000 years on, that very foolishness is the bedrock of our faith. For it was God, on Easter Sunday who proclaimed "April Fools" to the doubters, the evil ones, the faithless ones. And the unexpected had happened only because of the obedience of Christ – so go on - be an April Fool, be fools for Christ, proclaiming what the cross has achieved in your life to those who have yet to hear the Good News of forgiveness, healing, and hope for the world.

*Foolish God, whose love for us is so great,
may we who have been welcomed as your children into your family,
bring others to find you for themselves too.
Thank you, that in Jesus, nothing can separate us from your love,
and you proved it to the uttermost on that first Good Friday
and we now live as Easter People,
claiming the promise of eternal life and the gift of your Spirit.
Blessing, honour and glory be yours,
Foolish, Wonderful, Loving God. In Christ we pray.
Amen*