

## Lenten thoughts..

### What did Jesus himself have to say about his dying on the cross?

We begin in Luke, when Jesus had just come back from his time of temptation in the wilderness.

He began to teach in the synagogues of Galilee, where the people heard him gladly.

One day he stood up and read these words from the prophet Isaiah:

*The Spirit of the Lord is on me,  
because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners  
And recovery of sight for the blind,  
To release the oppressed,  
To proclaim the year of the Lord's favour. (Luke 4:18,19)*

Jesus knew that his mission was not of himself, but from God:

*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. (John 3:16,17)*

Jesus was clear who he was and what he could offer to people:

*I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty. (John 6:35)*

*I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. (John 14:6)*

Jesus was clear that he would have a personal relationship with those who responded to him.

*I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.... I know my sheep and my sheep know me. (John 10: 11,14)*

*I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener.... Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself. It must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. (John 15: 1,4)*

Jesus makes clear that anyone who accepts him has a wonderful future. On the last night before he died, he reassured his disciples :

*Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me. (John 14: 1 – 3)*

We can rejoice that we have a God who reaches out to us in love, and who says *to each one of us:*

*Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. (Matthew 11: 28, 29)*

This Lent, then, let's remember the real, historical Jesus who did all that for us.