

Good morning friends

A message from Maggie . . .

Good morning everyone.

I am a great fan of Melanie Read, a columnist who writes for the Times newspaper. She was an award-winning columnist with the Herald in Glasgow before joining the Times in 2007. Ten years ago, she had a catastrophic riding accident when the horse she was practising jumps on refused a fence and she was pitched off. She landed head first onto the ground and broke her neck. This accident happened on April 2nd 2010 which was Good Friday and a few days before her 53rd birthday. On the 10th anniversary, she wrote her weekly column reflecting back on those ten years.

Last year her book recounting the events of that day and her subsequent journey was published. "The world I fell out off" is a gem of a book. In the foreword by Andrew Marr, who suffered a stroke and still has a disability, writes "If a book makes you cry, properly cry and makes you laugh repeatedly, both quietly and loudly, then it's safe to say that it is a good book" The book chronicles her rehabilitation as a tetraplegic, a painful and difficult and on-going journey. She remains severely disabled and describes her everyday problems with great insight.

Having worked as a physiotherapist in the NHS, I have always been interested in people who struggle with illness and disabilities and what can be achieved, so it is no surprise that I follow her weekly column with interest.

I am also a great fan of the Psalms, which speak of every human condition. They can be extremely challenging to read and to use as a focus for prayer, but I love the diverse array of emotions expressed and I find them immensely helpful. However I feel or what- ever challenge I face, there always seems to be a psalm that speaks to me. Today the psalm set for today's morning prayer is Psalm 77 and begins by crying out to the Lord and voicing concerns.

The speaker, or probably singer, is in some distress and describes the agony of his intercessions in order to emphasize the urgency of his requests. He tells how his cry to God is loud and goes on throughout the day and the night with outstretched arm and agitated spirit. Times of silence come and the speaker is unable to sleep. He remembers times past and struggles to find God in his situation. He recalls the history when God parted the waters to make a way for the people as they were released from the slavery of the Egyptians. God passed through the waters, with unseen footprints and led the people to safety through the hand of Moses and Aaron. And the Psalm finishes there. We imagine the speaker continuing with his prayers silently and pleading for God to aid him in his distress.

As we read this Psalm we can see how strenuous intercessions can be, when we are faced with so much distress and disorder in our world these days. But we have a place where we can rest our burdens as we recall what Jesus has done for us. Our prayers are "through Jesus Christ, our Lord" and we can draw strength from what Jesus has done.

We look forward now to what many of us have been praying for in the re-opening of our churches for prayer, for services and especially to be able to receive the Sacrament again. We continue to remember all that God has done for past generations and for us and we pray that we will be led safely through the trials and difficulties of this present time.

With every blessing

Maggie



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