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Diocesan Lent Course 2021

Reflection Three

Words from the gospel for today.

But he was speaking of the temple of his body.

In the pandemic, that we've all been experiencing, we've become very aware of our bodies, and we become very aware also of the painfulness of death, and of disease and loss and grief. And this aspect of the body is something that Jesus is beginning to map out as he speaks about his body being the temple.

The disciples don't understand what he's talking about, because they are looking at the temple in Jerusalem, the huge, massively impressive building, which is also the place of worship and encounter with the living God, the temple of his body.

One of the aspects of the pandemic and its lockdown, is that our bodies have been very limited. Our freedom has been inhibited, and we've not been able to interact with each other.

And one of the things I think we've learned is that physical meeting with people cannot be replicated by this process even, and zoom and other technical modern inventions.

Know, as human beings, it is the physicality of the body that matters, and it is the physicality of the body in death that speaks to us about our hope for resurrection. For our body also is a temple. It is the temple of the holy spirit, it is the temple of the living place of Jesus Christ for, as Christians, baptism is the union with him in his death in order that we might also share in his resurrection.

And just as the temple in Jerusalem, which the disciples were looking at, just as that was the inter-section between time and eternity. So, this temple, which you and I are, is also the place of inter-section between time and eternity.

And perhaps it is the mask that has taught us most powerfully about the inhibition that we are facing. For it is in the face that we recognize the fullness of a person's character and relationship.

Our hope as Christians, we say is that we will see God face to face, that we will recognize in the one who made us the love of the one whom we have always longed for.

And so this body is the place of intersection, and as we reflect this Lent, on preparing to renew our baptisms, let us also reflect on those whose bodies have been parted from us, by death, through the Covid pandemic, and let us pray for them in the confidence that the

intersection, between time and eternity, is the place where Jesus, who lives in eternity, draws us through death, out of time, into the freedom of the children of God in heaven