

Saint Michael and All Angels Parish Church, Bramcote



Tuesday, 14th September 2021

Bible Readings: [Psalm 8; Genesis 3:1-15; John 12:27-36a](#)

Holy Cross Day

(Each reading may be viewed at www.biblegateway.com)

Reflection: ②

Today is Holy Cross Day in the Church's calendar, when three events are commemorated: the finding of the True Cross in around AD 326 by St Helena; the subsequent dedication of churches on the sites of Calvary and Jesus' sepulchre by her son, Emperor Constantine the Great; and the restoration of the Cross to Jerusalem in AD629, after it had been captured by the Persians in AD614.

But why does the Church feel it important to remember these things? After all, the cross was, and still is, a shocking symbol, an instrument of torture used to execute criminals (remember the two thieves crucified with Jesus), a shameful and brutal way to die. But for Christians the cross is not the final ending it seems, it is merely the beginning. For people who don't believe in the resurrection, Yes, the cross is the end, and a singularly nasty end at that. But for those who do believe in the risen Christ, in the joy of the resurrection, then the cross is a powerful symbol of God's grace, love and mercy. Just as the Israelites, complaining bitterly to Moses about their conditions, could look up at the bronze serpent and be saved from death by snake bite, so we can look at Jesus on the cross, recognising his ultimate sacrifice for the sins of the whole world and, as we read in John 3, being assured of eternal life as a consequence.

Our response should be to take up our own crosses, whatever that may mean for each one of us, and follow him.

Prayer:

Living God, whose Son died on the cross for everyone who lives: show us by his dying how the place of defeat can be the place of victory; and help us to take up our own cross, whatever form it takes, so that women and men may recognise your love in us and come to you, with Christ, in Resurrection glory. Amen.

"Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you." 1 Peter 5.7