

## **Worcester Cathedral**

Monday in Holy Week, 25 March 2024

Address at Compline

Lamentations 1. 12-16

*Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by? Look and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow, which was brought upon me, which the LORD inflicted on the day of his fierce anger. From on high he sent fire; it went deep into my bones; he spread a net for my feet; he turned me back; he has left me stunned, faint all day long. My transgressions were bound into a yoke; by his hand they were fastened together; they weigh on my neck, sapping my strength; the Lord handed me over to those whom I cannot withstand. The LORD has rejected all my warriors in the midst of me; he proclaimed a time against me to crush my young men; the Lord has trodden as in a wine press the virgin daughter Judah. For these things I weep; my eyes flow with tears; for a comforter is far from me, one to revive my courage; my children are desolate, for the enemy has prevailed.*

It started when I watched Postman Pat as a child. The cartoon vicar welcomed Pat into the church and gave him a cup of tea. Postman Pat and the vicar put the teapot on the altar.

Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by? For these things I weep; my eyes flow with tears.

Years later I noticed that, despite the sign to take your hat off, there was a man who brazenly entered church in a baseball cap.

Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by? For these things I weep; my eyes flow with tears.

I visited a superstore on a Sunday in Indiana. I could not buy a bottle of wine as a gift, but I could buy a gun, and ammunition, and was encouraged to do so.

Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by? For these things I weep; my eyes flow with tears.

I listened to friends whose lives were examined, pulled apart, crushed, and lessened all in the name of a government benefit review and they were ignored as having no voice.

Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by? For these things I weep; my eyes flow with tears.

The immigrants wash up, bodies are counted, but the cry goes out – not for the refugee – but for the borders, the laws. Lives cast away for the sake of statistics and votes.

Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by? For these things I weep; my eyes flow with tears.

The world in its entirety sees the staving desperation of the people of Gaza, and it is weeks and deathly months before aid finds its way, or that a ceasefire has even a glimpse of reality.

Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by? For these things I weep; my eyes flow with tears.

I wish it was just the teapot on the altar in Postman Pat's church, or the man wearing his baseball cap with oblivious pride. For these things I smile; for these things I long.

Lord Jesus, in the depths of our despair we cry to you;  
In the world's suffering may we see your suffering,  
By your passion, grant us compassion,  
By your death bring us hope,  
By your life set us and all your children free.

Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by? For these things I weep; my eyes flow with tears.

*Canon Stephen Edwards, Interim Dean.*