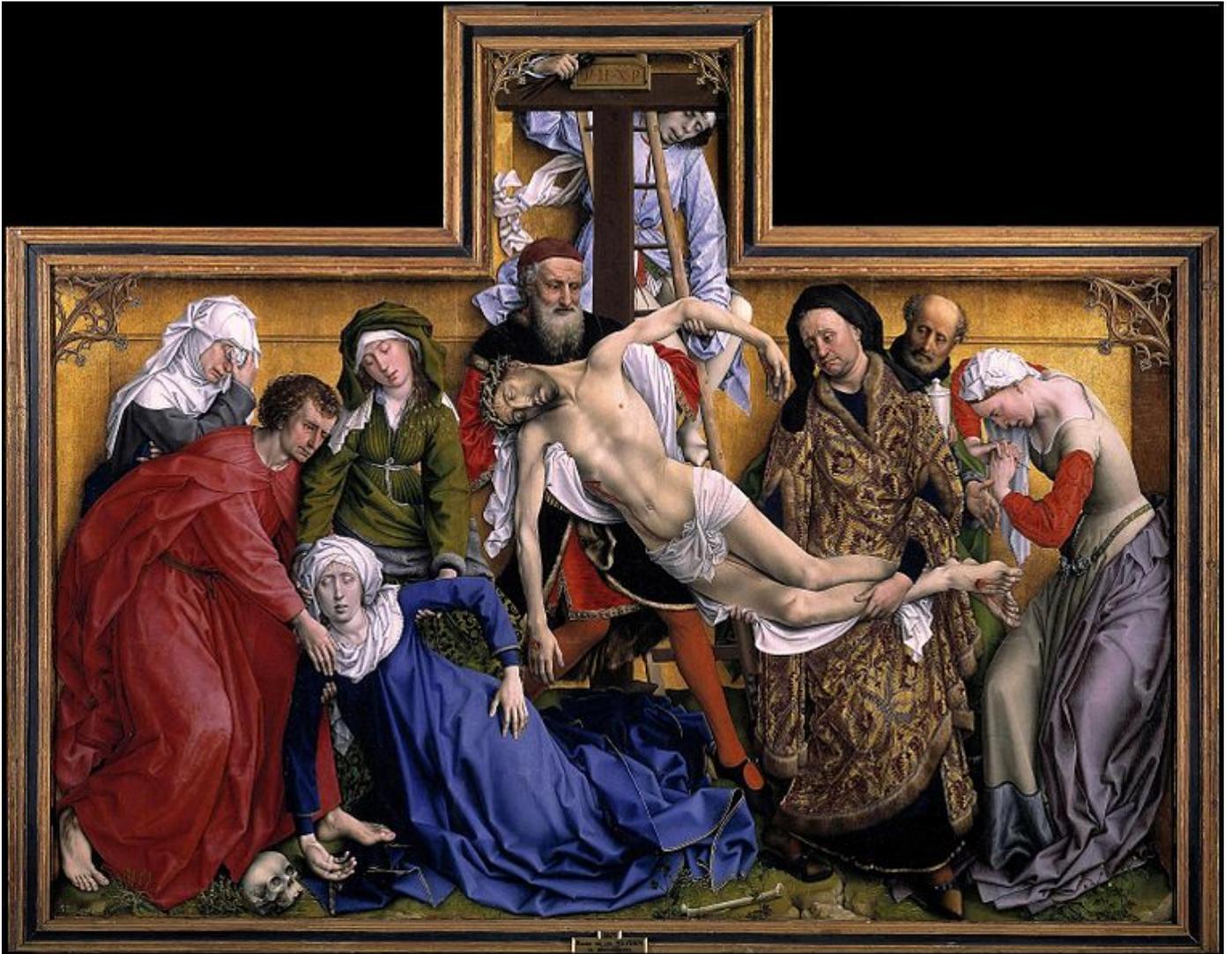


# Sermon

## 'The Justice and the Love of God'

Year C 2019 Sunday of the Passion



Watching the footage, or listening to the coverage, of Cardinal Pell last month, being led through the crowded streets of our own city, by an armed escort, in the midst of a baying crowd, I wonder, how did *you* feel?

I'll tell you how I felt. I felt shocked, to the very core of my being. I felt sick, to the very bottom of my gut. I felt overwhelmed, by every, raw emotion. As I felt a deep sadness, rising within me.

And it reminded me of another history. The history, of Jesus. Who, in another city, in another time, was led through the crowded streets, by an armed escort, in the midst of a baying crowd, to be crucified, finally rejected, outside the city walls.

To the utter surprise of the early disciples of Jesus. Who were shocked, to the very core of their being. Who felt sick, to the very bottom of their gut. As Jesus died, for you and me. As Jesus died, for this world. The justice of God, in an unjust world.

Universal human sin, original, ordinary, human pride, is the desire, to be like God. Openly manifest, in our own time and place in history, it was openly manifest, in Jesus' day, too. For this world, in its desire to be like God, as no room in the inn, for God. God is pushed out, banished, outside the city's walls. There is no room, in this public square, in this public life, for God.

Today is Palm Sunday. The Sunday of the Passion. The day on which we, like Jesus, turn our faces, like flint, toward Jerusalem. Toward the holy mountain of God. Where Christ died, for the salvation of the world.

Where, with proper awe, astonishment, and wonder, we come to look upon, in this sin dark world, the love of God, for us, and for the world.

Anyone who can read a newspaper, or access the internet, will be able to tell you. What Christianity has been saying, for two thousand years. This world is *not* the kingdom of God. No. Christianity, waits. For the future of the day, that has now come, in Jesus Christ, his death and resurrection, for this world.

In this world of Adam, of marred, human being, Jesus is the new Adam, the one true human being. Whose sacrifice alone, and his resurrection alone, can bring us home. Safe at last.

In his book, 'Violence and the Sacred', Rene Girard highlights that it is through the mechanism of the scapegoat, that human culture, with all of its violence, has managed to survive itself. Whether Cardinal Pell was a scapegoat, for the sins of the church, as is claimed by his closest followers, or the violent man, that he is now condemned to be, time will tell. He will receive an appeal in a human court. But there can be no appeal, if the man is dead. There can be only a recourse, to a higher, a much higher, authority.

When God raised Jesus from the dead, the judgment of God, was handed down. On this world of violence, that had laid its hands, on the one, innocent, human being. In whose outstretched arms on the cross, the justice, and the love, of God was done, in this violent, and in this unjust, world.