

The good life



Patsy McGregor *reflects*
on John 19:25-27

After a family meal I laid down to rest on the sofa surrounded by my family – children, parents and grandparents, chatting and watching television together – sharing a day for rest, refreshment and relaxation. Gradually I noticed how the TV commercials intruded into the room, with their subtle messages that implied that we didn't have enough, encouraging us to consume more, stuff ourselves and our homes with yet more belongings.

On another occasion I was strolling around an international airport, awaiting a flight. My eyes focused upon a store sign reading: "The good life: business, culture, design, architecture, mode, voyages, lifestyle." I pondered. Does this really describe the good life? There was nothing about being moral or principled, or having good relationships and

thinking positively. Don't these things describe the good life better than accumulating worldly possessions?

At the time of his death Jesus bowed his head and died. The Son of Man's sacrifice did not look encouraging. Standing close to the cross, at the place of her son's forthcoming crucifixion, was his mother, his mother's sister, disciples and many friends. Paradoxically, Jesus was dying,

sacrificing his life, so we could live a truly good life.

When we look to Christ we are radiant – our faces never covered

with shame. Those who fear God lack nothing. Now wouldn't you agree? That is the good life. ☺

Dear Lord, thank you for answering me and delivering me from my fears. I am radiant because I trust you. My face is not covered with shame, because you save me from all my troubles. Amen.

A mother's reflection for Mothering Sunday

by Christine Clark

I always think that the timing of Mothering Sunday, just before Lent and Easter, is ironic. Every parent's worst nightmare is for their child to suffer, or die before their time. So when we celebrate motherhood and the joy of our children this Sunday, we may also be conscious of Mary the Mother of Jesus, and her pain as she watched her son suffer torture and death. She had known, from his conception, that

he was special, different, and that he would suffer and die to fulfil God's word. But now it was happening.

Another common emotion for parents is pride in their children, whether it is for their achievements or just the fact that they seem to turn out all right in the end. Mary was proud of Jesus, who he was and what he achieved. So this Mothering Sunday let's remember Mary who, like other parents, will have had many emotions for her son – love, exasperation, sorrow, grief, pain and pride. ☺

Lent lunch – a slice of bread

by Ricarda Witcombe

The word "companion" comes from Latin and literally means "together with bread". It's a good image for a Lent lunch, which celebrates togetherness and our companions – those we sit beside as well as those we hold in our hearts.

Bread is such a central feature of our faith – one of the tangible ways we know God with us, sustaining our bodies and our souls. If you are sitting down to a

Lent lunch this week, remember Jesus as you break your bread. Ponder what sustenance you need for the demands of your life – what graces do you want to ask for? Maybe patience? Or comfort? Or healing? What sustenance can you offer others around the table? Does someone need your time, your company, your prayers? One of the wonders of the body of Christ is that we all have a part to play, we all have something to give – and more to receive. ☺

“Those who have all that they want and desire, know joy. But no one has this except those whose will is one with God's will.”

Meister Eckhart (c. 1260-1328), German theologian, philosopher and mystic