

Good Friday 2016: The Passion and Death of the Lord
St Augustine's
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“IT IS FINISHED”

“It is finished.”

Before today is over, about 150,000 people will die. Some lived lives of great virtue and will be mourned by many. Others lived lives not so pure and their passing will be missed by few. None, I'm guessing, will be remembered by a billion people 2,000 years from now.

We are gathered here today not because a man died. It is sad when we remember that a good person was murdered. But by now the tears would be dried and our collective memories would be erased.

We are here today because *God is dead*. This is deeper than grief for those we loved. It is more than knowing we will never again touch them, or laugh with them, or weep with them. This is the moment of terror because the worst has happened: God has left us.

We are condemned to wander in the wilderness forever, with no one to hold us, to comfort us, to save us. We will live our lives alone, suffer alone, and die alone.

And we are finished if we believe this.

God did not die to leave us, but to take us with him. In the 14th century, the English mystic Julian of Norwich experienced a personal vision of Jesus in his Passion and wrote:

Our good Lord said [to me] most joyfully: See how I love you. My child, behold and see what delight I have in your salvation, and for my love rejoice with me. See that I loved you so much, before I died for you, that I wanted to die for you.

Only in that place beyond reason called love do we discover the truth that will take us through this, our longest night: This story is not finished.