

Good Friday : At the heart of the Christian faith is a tragedy

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At the heart of the Christian faith is a tragedy – the tragic, unjust, shameful death of an innocent sufferer.

It's a tragedy that anyone has to endure pain, anguish, and do so in isolation.

It's a tragedy that is compounded when that person is also vilified, scapegoated, told that they deserve it.

It's a tragedy when the systems of justice fail.

At the heart of the Christian faith is this tragedy – the tragic, unjust, shameful death of Jesus of Nazareth.

We are at a moment in history when a similar tragedy is being played out in so many places across the world – innocent sufferers are enduring tragic deaths, many in isolation from their loved ones. There's no justice to it.

It's also a time when some people are being vilified and scapegoated, simply by being part of a medical crew or because of their race. It's a time when some people are afraid that the social network is failing them, and they fear for their future.

We remember the tragedy of Good Friday, because at the heart of our faith is the affirmation that God is not quarantined from the human condition – from pain, from shame, from isolation and injustice. God knows those things from the

inside. In Jesus Christ, God endures those things with us and for us. God's compassion is first-hand.

In Jesus, God is with us, and with every person and every creature that suffers. Tragedy is real – today with the pandemic, for so many families across the world, tragedy is more real than ever before.

But the tragedy of Jesus' death on Good Friday tells us that suffering and death don't have the last word.

God's compassion, God's faithful love, is stronger even than death. Thanks be to God.