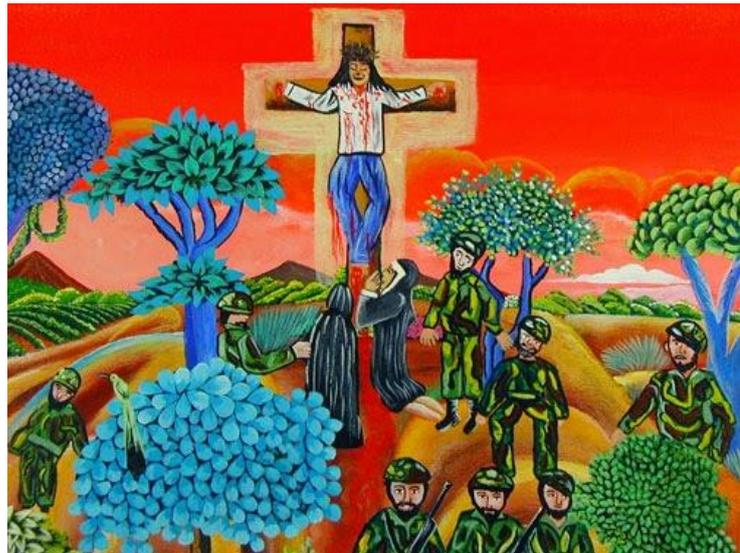


Thought for the Day, Holy Cross Day, Monday 14 September 2020

by Clive Barrett (St Michael's)

Genesis 3.1-15; John 12.27-36a

[Christ Crucified in
Nicaragua](#), by Jose Ignacio
Fletes Cruz.



A Second Eve?

Was Eve the first scientist – curious, experimenting, reflecting on her results? The post-Exilic author of the creation narrative shows her moving on from Adam's bucolic mindlessness: knowledge, right and wrong, life – and, yes, death. Just because we can distinguish right from wrong, does not mean we always choose right.

Scriptural imagery – which needs careful use in our racist society – expresses this as light and dark: “Let there be lights” [Gen. 1.14], “Walk in the light” [Is. 2.5], “I am the light” [John 8.12]...

Darkness surrounded the Cross. When Judas left the Last Supper, “it was night” [John 13.30]. When Jesus was on the Cross, “darkness came over the whole land” [Mark 15.33].

I was once vicar of St Cross, Middleton. There was no such person; the name just meant “Holy” Cross. 14 September was patronal festival. The focus was the Cross, without other Holy Week distractions. Can you see the Cross *without* the filter of Easter, the vindication of Resurrection? If time had stopped that Friday, what would the Cross mean then?

We would not yet know later Christian doctrines about the person of Christ. We would only know the teaching and example of Jesus, his preaching of the Kingdom of God, his way of nonviolence. We would wonder at the vulnerability of love in action, a victory over human sin and violence. We would be drawn to him, even on the Cross.

It can be hard to see behind the Easter “Wow!”, that explosion of light, to the light in the darkness before. That's where we find the real Jesus, his teaching, example, inspiration.

Jesus is called another Adam [1 Cor.15.45]. Perhaps he was a another Eve: explorer, pioneer, trying a new path? The result of his “experiment” was life and light for us all.

“A Second *Eve*, to the fight,
and to the rescue came...”