

## GOOD FRIDAY 2011

The notice fixed to the cross of Jesus was written in three languages, Latin, Greek and Hebrew, so that everyone would know the nature of his crime, the reason for his execution. It read, "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews." Pilate felt compelled to write it, he did not know why. When confronted by angry objectors he simply but firmly replied, "What I have written, I have written." The whole affair had, somehow, been out of his control. He, the governor of the place, felt pushed and pulled in every direction, and was unhappy and frustrated at the outcome. He had signed a death warrant, but he wanted the victim to live.

As Jesus hung upon the cross for those long hours on that Friday afternoon, many people came to the place and stood and watched. Some jeered, more cried. They have come in their millions ever since and stood and stared and asked the unanswerable questions. Why do people suffer? Why do **good** people suffer? Why do people make other people suffer? Why is life so cruel?

The image of Jesus crucified hangs over the world and mirrors the torment that crushes human beings. Some people rage against the injustice of it all and explode into violence to damn the world for its cruelty. Other people do not have the energy or the will to complain. Onlookers go quietly home shaking their heads in sorrow and dismay. And the man on the cross?... what was it **he** said? "Father, forgive them. They know not what they do."

When the agony was over, his friends came and laid his body in a tomb. Rest in peace. Then came the fall of night, and another day, and the fall of night again. The crucifixion of Jesus happens again every time an innocent person suffers. The drama of Good Friday is always here. But that is not the last word. Jesus of Nazareth IS the king of the Jews, and of all peoples. He is the Lord of life. What God has written, God has written.