

3rd Sunday - Protest



After George Floyd was killed last summer by a police officer kneeling for nearly eight minutes on his neck, millions and millions of Americans took to the streets in protest. So did many others all round the world. As he died, Floyd had repeatedly gasped, "I can't breathe", a phrase chanted later by vast protesting crowds. It seemed as if the whole world, stifled by racial injustice, was at last resisting.

In today's gospel we find Jesus in Jerusalem just before Passover (John 2.13-22). He too is stifled by injustice. The Temple air is thick with it. The sellers of birds and animals and those exchanging Roman currency for the Temple's own were corrupt, ripping off those fulfilling the requirement to buy items for sacrifice. The poor suffered most, of course.

Jesus' protest was swift, strong and completely disruptive. Whip in hand, he drove out the animals, tipped the offending coins all over the floor and overturned the tables, savaging the status quo. And it's no accident that he singled out the dove-sellers for particular rebuke. A dove, or perhaps a pair of them, was all the already oppressed masses could afford. Jesus' holy anger rose up on their behalf. Wherever there is injustice, it still does.

Today...

...upend the tables of our unthinking privilege, O Christ,
that we may stand with you in protest at today's injustices.

Amen