

Daily Reflections (25th April - ANZAC Day)

Unless a wheat grain falls into the ground and dies, it remains only a single grain!

As a grateful nation, today we stop to remember all those who have given up their life for the rest of us. It is interesting that we do this as we continue to celebrate Easter time. The gospel today reminds us of the great quote from Jesus about the grain of wheat that needs to give up its life and die in the ground, for new life to grow. On a spiritual level we understand this as referring to our life in the fulness of God's presence, after we conclude our pilgrim journey here on earth. In the context of today's commemoration it also reminds us of the new life that grows after the sacrifices of many of our sisters and brothers who died at the service of our country.

The original ANZAC story has become part of our psyche as a nation. It is considered by many as the event that, in a real way, gave birth to the nation. The event where we 'came of age.' But along the decades many other men and women have joined the ranks of the first ANZACs and have fallen in war in order to restore justice and peace. Many others returned back home to their families, broken people. We often hear the stories of the many who came back from war, changed, never to be the same again. They too sacrificed their life and we thank them. They went to war so that we can be safe. I hope that as a nation we continue to look after them and respect them.

For us in Victoria, this ANZAC Day is also marked by the death of four Victoria Police members who were killed on their line of duty. They did not go to war, but they were killed as they carried out their daily work. They too laid down their lives for us.

I would also like to remember all our nurses and doctors who this year are fighting a different war. They too are risking their own health and their lives so that we can get a better life.

It is from these sacrifices that new life grows. Perhaps we would argue: why do people have to give up their lives for justice and peace? Jesus gives us the answer: He came to proclaim the one Truth, but the world we live in struggles with Truth and is constantly trying to create its own truth. Anyone who is courageous enough to stand up for what is true and what is just, will also find himself in the way of the 'way of the world.'

Today we remember them all. Lest we forget their sacrifices.