

## REFLECTION: WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE...

Riding to work in the rain is a welcome experience for me. Very quickly the water presses in from all sides. I feel alive . . . and a little cold. I have used a bit of water lately in some infant baptisms. As a symbol it has two poles. At one extreme, water is devastatingly destructive, violent, chaotic. (Trying to get ones head around the floods in Pakistan is difficult. How many millions displaced?) At the other extreme, water is the thing that leads to life and in this big brown flat land, we know that all too well.

Water and these two extremes tell the story of Jesus. *Destruction/creation; death/life; Friday/Sunday; Crucifixion/Resurrection; sadness/joy.* So in baptism, the naked child is overwhelmed with water. (It is no accident that the font used at Radford is black and looks remarkably like a coffin – I wonder if people recognize this?) The child is ‘buried’ in Friday and the waters of destruction and crucifixion. The child is then lifted out in the waters of life and resurrection to the joyous sounds of celebration. The use of water tells the story of what is God’s work in ‘Christening’, the joining of a person with Christ.

**Faith** invites a full and extravagant embracing of life.

**Faith** recognizes that pain, death, hardship, grief are not separate from this same embrace.

**Faith** recognizes that living fully is not the holding on to life but giving it away.

This is what Jesus has done and calls us to follow. I don’t know how to pray for the people of Pakistan. I offer here a song sung in chapel by the students. It is written by Robin Mann (Together in Song 689).

*Lord, hear my praying, listen to me;  
You know there’s evil in what I see.  
I know I’m part all that is wrong;  
Still, won’t you hear my sorrowing song.*

*Children are crying, hungry for food,  
Sick from diseases - God are you good?  
People are homeless, lost and alone;  
God are you hiding?  
Where have you gone?*

*Why do the rich ones steal form the poor?  
Why do they build their weapons of war?  
How can you stand the torture and pain,  
Hope disappearing, freedom in chains?*

*Jesus, remind us that you are found  
With those who cry, with those who are bound;  
Where there is suffering,  
you will be there –  
help us to follow: Lord, hear my prayer.*