

29th March – Monday of Holy Week

Allergic

“We are currently wealthy, fat, comfortable and complacent. We have currently a built-in allergy to unpleasant or disturbing information.”

Ed Morrow

Speech to the Radio and Television News Directors Association Convention, 1958

Charlie Brown, from Charles Shultz's *Peanuts* cartoon strip, is given many wonderful phrases. As we step into Holy Week, there's this one:

You know, I'm allergic to Mondays.

Which of us hasn't felt or even voiced that, as we've struggled with motivation after a weekend, to face work, or college, or school, or just fulfilling the obligations in an over-full diary? How we wish, sometimes, we could skip Monday, and say, "It's downhill for the rest of the week".

This "allergic to Mondays" syndrome has, I believe, bedevilled Christian people's approach to Holy Week. Through the years, many of us would mark the start of Holy Week on Palm Sunday, and then jump seven days to the celebration of Easter. Some would stop off for a Maundy Thursday Communion, while a few might attend a Good Friday reflection. But Monday? No thank you! I'm allergic to Mondays.

The legendary US broadcaster, Ed Morrow, knew a thing or two about the media. Seventy years after his speech from which the quote above is taken, we're not as allergic to bad news as we were, given what's fed to us on a daily basis. But because of that, he suggested, "We are currently wealthy, fat, comfortable and complacent." Might that also be a criticism of us in our Christian lives? We can certainly be accused of being complacent, especially if we want to skip the hard parts, jump to the end of the story, without taking time to face up to what disturbs us.

Holy Week needs to be worked at. I'd rather it was an easy week to tackle. But it isn't. So we need to face our Monday, to rise up from our comfortable complacency and be disturbed and challenged, to learn and grow, to think and pray. We may have a natural allergy to that, like Charlie Brown's allergy to Mondays, but we have to get through Monday if we hope to have any understanding of what's to come in the rest of the week.

A prayer for today

I know it's hard work, but you tell me it's worth it, Lord. So, here goes ... Amen

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