

Yesterday we meditated for a time on the idea of our being *consecrated in truth*. Jesus is eternally consecrated to his Father, and he showed us what it costs a human being to be consecrated with the same total outpouring of self. It didn't look good: it looked agonising, and ugly, and fatal.

The degree of the Cross's charmlessness is a measure of our human distance from God. It alerts us to the fact that what we call *living a decent human life* is actually a blind for an indecent life, because our idea of a decent life is one where we come out having won, having done better than the people around us, and therefore being rich and free, where so many are poor and oppressed. If everyone around you is living a life you would not like to be living, you've obviously got a decent life.

Consecration implies an outpouring of your life, all that you have, in love. On earth it means death, and we all secretly know it. So we devise a concept of "goodness" which includes all the profit-taking enjoyment we demand *alongside* a measure of kindness, a measure of sympathy, a measure of generosity towards the less fortunate.

The trouble is that this tightrope-act which avoids real nastiness, whilst preserving our own financial superiority, is so hard to devise, and demands so many self-deceptions and designer-ignorance of what we're really costing other people, that we become lost in the performance of it, and can no longer see the wood for the trees. People in complacent leafy suburbs in England no longer see the starving millions who die for their second car and their holiday flat.

This situation is a damning distance from the consecration of the Son of God to the Father - which is where our true *eternal* happiness lies.

For this reason we have the Church, whose rôle is always to comfort the disturbed, and to disturb the comfortable. If we make sure that we are one in the Church, we shall be one with the poor. If we are one with the poor, we stand a good chance of being one with Christ, who made himself poor (or, in John-speak, *consecrated himself*) so that he might lift up the least of humanity to become one with God.

Let's seek to pour out our lives - not in some celestial prayer-dome, but where Jesus poured out his: surrounded by the needy, the hungry, the lonely, the demented, the disinherited.... and let's pray for the presbyteries of the Nottingham Diocese, that someone with a consecrated life may be found to open their doors when all these people come to ring the doorbells!