

Examples of engaged faith for Good Friday

Claire Schaeffer-Duffy | Apr. 21, 2011 NCR Today

Six weeks before he was assassinated, Archbishop Romero gave a profoundly important speech in Louvain, Belgium explaining the socio-political dimension of faith in Christ.

The archbishop said his work as pastor among the poor of war-torn El Salvador had taught him that Christian faith does not separate us from the world but rather submerges us in it: that the Church is not an elite but rather a follower of that Jesus who lived, worked, struggled and died in the midst of the city, the *polis*.

Like Romero, many people have given witness to this Christ who chose to submerge Himself in this world, a place of exploitation and oppression as well as generosity and goodness. Tucked amidst all the tales of destruction reported in the news are examples of this engaged faith.

I came across two this week that are worth contemplating as we approach Christ's Passion which occurred and continues to occur in the midst of the *polis*.

- Yesterday, the Associated Press reported that dozens of Israel's most prominent intellectuals and artists have [signed a declaration endorsing a Palestinian state](#) [1] on the basis of the 1967 border and asserting that an end to Israel's occupation will liberate the two peoples and open the way to a lasting peace.?

The practical consequences of the declaration are probably small but it signifies a rejection of us-vs.-them-thinking and more importantly, a recognition of the *inter*-dependence between the two peoples.

Yaron Ezrahi, a political theorist at The Hebrew University in Jerusalem and one of the signers, told AP the group chose this week to issue its declaration because it is Passover, which marks the freedom of the Jewish people from slavery.

“We don't want to pass over the Palestinian people,” Ezrahi said. “This is a holiday of freedom and independence.”

- And from the West Bank farming community of Al-Bweira, my friend Paul Rehm, who is a member of the Christian Peacemakers Team, writes of the tedious, daily work of removing the “blasphemous” boulders sealing off the one road leading into the village.

Paul says settlers, as well as the Israeli army, have created a “triple blockade” on the road, delaying emergency vehicles’ access to the village and complicating the daily commutes of farmers who bring their crops to the nearby city of Hebron.

On Easter morning, when we talk of the Empty Tomb, I will think of Paul rolling away the stones in Al-Bweira and be glad for this present-day realization of Resurrection.

For more information on the campaign to Open the Al-Bweira Road, [visit their site here](#) [2] and click on ?actions.?

Rehm asks that letters requesting removal of the ?triple blockade? be sent to Major General Avi Mizrahi and Israeli Ambassador Michael Oren (addresses below).

Major General Avi Mizrahi
Office of Central Command ?64
Military Postal #02367
5741 Israel

Ambassador Michael Oren
Embassy of Israel
3514 International Drive, NW
Washington D.C. 2008

Source URL (retrieved on 06/24/2017 - 18:58): <https://www.ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/examples-engaged-faith-good-friday>

Links:

[1] <http://graphics8.nytimes.com/packages/pdf/world/PalestinianState.pdf>

[2] <https://www.ncronline.org/www.palestinianrightscommittee.org>