



This is a day for taking a breath but it is not simply an emotional transition between Good Friday and Easter Sunday. Nor a time to be exclusively preparing for the liturgy, meals, and festivities of Easter Sunday and the joy of spring! There is a question or two we ought to be thinking about today. We have been on many different paths these past few weeks. I think today is one of the interludes when a lot of us meet at the same crossroad. Let me tell you about Paul Clasper.

Many years ago Paul Clasper (1923–2011), was one of the people strongly urging the founding of Starcross Monastic Community. In 1950 Paul and his wife had been appointed missionaries in Burma,

both of his daughters were born there. Paul always considered himself a missionary no matter where he was. But his definition of the task of a missionary might have troubled any Christians who tend to box the Way of Jesus in doctrines and rigid beliefs. Paul said,

*My job as a missionary is to discover how God is breaking through in cultures other than my own.*

That made a deep impression on me. And today is a good day to ask ourselves “How is God breaking through in cultures outside our comfort zone?” And what if that breakthrough is a still and quiet process?

In my lifetime organized mass murder of the helpless became a prized skill. Let's talk about some slaughters. Hitler and accomplices: Six million Jews, 16 million non-combatant Poles and Russians, between two and four million Soviet prisoners of war, between 200,000 and one million Roma (“Gypsies”), between 50,000 and 200,000 homosexuals, 275,000 mentally handicapped people — A genocide as high as 23 million men and women and children! All of this in addition to the civilian war casualties in places like Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Dresden, Nanking. Or, the 62 million dissidents who died in Stalin's reign or the like number under Mao. And it did not stop did it? Simply open the paper or turn on the TV news. How does God break through in cultures of death?

Perhaps a partial answer was found scrawled on the walls of a cave near Cologne where some French Jews were hiding from the Nazi terror:

*I believe in the sun  
though it is late in rising.*

*I believe in love  
though it is absent.*

*I believe in God  
though he is  
silent ...*

This is perhaps an age when God may be silent in order to help us listen to our own hearts.

***Brother Toby***

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