

THE BACKGROUND TO THE SCIAF EMERGENCY APPEAL FOR MOROCCO AND LIBYA

'We are all shocked by the devastating situations currently unfolding in Morocco and Libya. As part of the Caritas network, we have been able to respond immediately, sending funds to provide urgent aid to those in greatest need. On Friday a 6.8 magnitude earthquake hit Morocco, leaving at least 2,900 people dead and thousands more injured. Over 300,000 people are in need of urgent aid, trapped in a remote and mountainous area that is difficult to reach.

In Libya, more than 5,000 people have died and 10,000 are recorded as missing. Storm Daniel hit on Sunday, causing two dams and four bridges in the city to collapse.

People affected by these disasters have lost everything. The death tolls will continue to rise, people remain trapped under debris, stranded by flood waters and many more urgently need access to aid.

We were able to respond immediately thanks to SCIAF's Emergency Response Fund. The Emergency Response Fund works to prevent disasters. When a disaster does strike, we respond immediately by feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, and rebuilding lives and communities.

As part of the international Caritas network, we're already there when emergencies strike and we will be there long after others have left. Join us in standing in solidarity with our sisters and brothers. Together we will do what we can to ease their suffering.'



Easter in Hell - A Review by Mairi Clunas of 'The Devil's Passion' by Justin Butler

This one person play was recently performed at the Fringe and seen by several parishioners

On Good Friday each year the Church recalls the death of Jesus with a solemn liturgy and the reading of the Passion Narrative from St. John's Gospel where Christ is portrayed as a King who reigns from the cross. In his powerful one act drama "The Devil's Passion" Justin Butcher demonstrates just how Jesus struggles with and ultimately overcomes the powers of darkness which arise within us and among us and invites us into a new dimension - the freedom of the children of God. The play consists of nine scenes - plus a prologue and epilogue - taken from the Gospel, each of which is perceived as a gate which Jesus opens in front of us so that we may walk safely through into a new level of freedom. Yet, the whole drama is viewed from the perspective of the devil.

The drama unfolds on a bare stage beside a cross, the effective use of lighting and occasional background music heightens the mood of each scene. The play begins at the first 'gate' - the Annunciation - where Mary is portrayed as a contemporary adolescent from the occupied territory in Palestine: 'she wipes her eyes, looks up and now she sees him [the angel] between wheeling beams of sun fire, who casts the winged shadow, the messenger of God, 'Tell God I say Yes' - The door of life opens within her, God and human essence fuse. The first gate falls." Then having failed to gain mastery over Jesus in the desert, the 'gates' erected by the evil one to enslave humanity fall in quick succession: as Jesus heals psychological and physical trauma, removes the barriers of cultural enmity between races as he talks to the Samaritan woman, and converts the god of materialism when he visits Zacchaeus. Finally, as he cleanses the temple, he demolishes the illusion of false piety - one of the most subtle snares to which humanity is prone.

The climax is, of course, the scene on Calvary when there is darkness over the whole land - evoked by sombre clouds and peels of thunder. Again, we meet Mary whom the devil tries to persuade that she has been deceived - "Is this what he promised you, the messenger of God?" But, as we know, Mary's faith does not fail. 'But she sees me and sees through me and shakes her head. "Be gone, Satan, your time is nearly up. All the pain and misery he will spin to finest gold. This sight that pierces my heart will tear open the heavens and bring paradise down at last to the dying earth." But this is not quite the end: the Devil knows the cause is lost as he retreats into the realm of the dead, only to discover that the light of Christ will soon shine there too - there is nowhere left to hide.

One of the effects of experiencing this drama may be the ability to gain a fresh perspective on the areas in our psyche where we feel bound by old wounds. Since he has overcome the brokenness of the world, Jesus invites us into a place of greater freedom. We are to endeavour to live in the liberty of the children of God.