

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY: Thursday 9th November 2023

By Revd John Marshall

A Father's Prayer upon the murder of his son.

By Bishop Dehqani-Tafti of Iran.

O God,

We remember not only our son but also his murderers,

Not because they killed him in the prime of his youth and made our hearts bleed and our tears flow,

Not because with this savage act they brought further disgrace on the name of our country among the civilised nations of the world,

But because through their crime we now follow thy footsteps more closely in the way of sacrifice,

The terrible fire of this calamity burns up all selfishness and possessiveness in us;

Its flame reveals the depth of depravity and meanness and suspicion, the dimension of hatred and the measure of sinfulness in human nature.

It makes obvious as never before our need to trust in God's love as shown in the cross of Jesus and his resurrection;

Love which makes us free from hate towards our persecutors;

Love which brings patience, forbearance, courage, loyalty, humility, generosity, greatness of heart:

Love which more than ever deepens our trust in God's final victory and his eternal designs for the Church and the world;

Love which teaches us how to prepare ourselves to face our own day of death.

O God,

Our son's blood has multiplied the fruit of the Spirit in the soil of our souls;

So when his murderers stand before thee on the day of judgement

Remember the fruit of the Spirit by which they have enriched our lives

And forgive.

- Oxford Book of Prayers

At the moment we are seeing people in so many contexts mourning their children who have been killed.

Bishop Dehqani-Tafti's response was remarkable.