

## **Thought for the day – Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2022**

**By Revd Kit Gunasekera**

### **Courage**

I was struck by the courage of the Russian journalist Marina Ovsyannikova. And also that of the Prime Ministers of Poland, Slovenia and the Czech Republic who traveled to Kyiv to meet President Zelensky, another whose courage many people have admired greatly. Nearer to home, I was struck by the courage of the two ladies who shared their pain and frustration at on going Racial Injustice at last night's Lent Course based on the TV series Uprising.

Courage, to me is different from being fearless. Courage, implies, the presence of fear, but fear pushed back to do what is right. Fearlessness is not something that inspires me, because I have fear. But courage inspires me. Sometimes, many times it takes courage to love our neighbours. Standing in solidarity, continuing to expose racial injustice, exposing the lies of the state, are acts of love. During Night Prayer, in Lent, we read these verses from Isaiah:

*Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin?*

*Isaiah 58. 6,7*

Some of these takes a lot of courage. Jesus showed immense courage when he got up onto his feet and wiped the sweat blood from his brow in the garden of Gethsemene, to display the greatest act of love, on the cross.

How might I overcome my fears to act more courageously to love my neighbour a little more? Jesus spent a lot of time alone with His heavenly Father. I am reminded of the first part of 1 John 4, which says - *There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear...* Fear I think, can often be muddled thinking, and priorities misplaced. Love, can penetrate that and bring clarity, and focus. The more time we spend with God, the source of love, the more honest we are with Him about our fears, the more clarity, focus and courage we find.