

## Thought for the Day - Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March

Hinges are more than things that hold a door in a doorway. On a laptop computer or a double display board, the hinges find their place right in the middle of the 'material' either side.

The 'hinge' can find itself as the turning point of stories, dramas, tragedies...and yes, even Gospels.

In Mark's Gospel, the turning point or 'hinge' is Caesarea Philippi and Peter's Confession of Faith. This remarkable moment is 'geographically' half way through the Gospel, and the theological thrust of the material in the second half after this hinge, this turning point, is very different from the first half.

Here, in the Johannine Gospel for today is a hinge, the geographical turning point of John's own drama. Again, the thrust of the material following the story of Lazarus is quite a contrast to the first half. Similar to the majority of miracles in Mark, all of John's 'signs' are found in the first half of his drama. Also, like Mark, Martha's Confession of Faith in John is both in the middle of the whole, the middle one of three...and involving a woman at that!

But why have a story about 'resurrection' on Passion Sunday? Surely we may think that this is a bit odd and 'stealing the thunder' of the Feast of the Resurrection in a fortnight's time.

But in conclusion of this hinge, v53 reveals a further secret and within it the reason for the choice of Gospel for today. In Chapter 11, what Jesus says about himself and does in and around the story of the raising of Lazarus brings the feelings of the chief priests and scribes to fever pitch. Like the Cleansing of the Temple in the Synoptic Gospels here John says "From that day on they plotted to take his life." (11:53). The 'beginning of the end' rightly finds its place here on Passion Sunday.

A couple of questions to finish with...one spiritual, one theological.

Firstly, can you recognise the 'hinge points' in your life, where your faith has 'lit up' in some small or great way and helped you to determine or strengthen your way forward?

Did Jesus know he was to die and if so from when did he know?

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