

## 5<sup>TH</sup> SCRIPTURAL STATION - PILATE CONDEMNS JESUS

by Fr Robbie Low

(Mk. 15 v 1 -15. Mt 27 v 1,2, 11-26. Lk. 22 v 66 – 23 v 5, 13-25. Jn.18v 28 - 19v16)

The Governor's Case:

'Bloody Jews, with their squeaking, squawking, squabbling. Their special ways. Their special allowances and privileges. What they will do. What they wont do. Why our gods are not good enough for them. Why they need our protection but must be excused military service. Why our imperial banners cant go up without causing a riot.

Why the hell did Pompey ever get involved in this disproportionate and petty mess of a nation? And who the hell thought it was a good idea to station a simple soldier like me to garrison this utter cluster? You tell me.

And now this. One of this incomprehensible rabble has peed in their beer and I'm supposed to sort it. By all the gods, I need this NOT.

To cap it all my dear wife, not given to too much sensitivity – I am her husband after all – has been up half the night with dreams of dire confusion round this latest pious parvenu. I calmed her. Told her that it would be dealt with otherwise. Not our business – back to a lady's life of lunching.

On with the motley. Time to look the part and put the fear of God up this splinter in the fingertip of time. A good flogging and a few days in 'jug' over this nonsensical festival of self- glorification, then everybody goes home. End of .....

Wheel Him in, sergeant.

There's two sorts, generally speaking, ship up on the Pavement before me. There's the ' can't say enough, babbling, protesting their innocence brigade', terrified, pleading 'it's a stitch up' etc etc.

And then there's the 'dumb insolence' party. Prepared to spit in your eye and 'die game'.

I assume both lots are guilty otherwise they wouldn't be here. Despise the first lot, quite admire the second. Hang them both as suits the politics of the empire and the peace of my particular patch.

This One seems, first off, to be in the Dumb Insolence wing.

The prosecution, lot of overpromoted old women, clucking imprecations and scratching around for evidence like so many disconsolate chickens.

I am profoundly uninterested in your ' how many angels on the head of a pin' nitpicking theology. To be honest it would give me the greatest pleasure on my next posting to raze this temple to the ground myself. I'm amazed some public spirited Roman hasn't already obliged. Just a matter of time if you ask me.

Claiming kingship is He? Well you've got the soggy remnant of your imaginary line in the tetrarchs, client kingdoms, local authorities in fancy dress. What's one more?

Are you a king?

What do you mean, I've said so. I said nothing of the kind.

Where did I get all this from? Hold on , laddie, I ask the questions.

Do you take me for another one of your Jewish wallahs?

And don't give that old schstick about 'THE TRUTH'.

I'm not as dumb as I look. I've been to enough middle class dinner parties to know the answer. I can wheel out the old relativist fraud with the best of them. 'What is truth?' , we chirp when we don't know.

Let me tell you you'll soon enough know the truth when a painted tribe of barmy fanatic Germans come swinging out of the forest at you or your column is ambushed by drugged up Parthian warlords. Take your pick. Kill or be killed. Unless you want your old feller as a post mortem hors d'oeuvre and your cranium doubling as a chalice in some barbarian's kitchen. That's the truth.

So, my fine friend. I admire your balls but give me a little help here.

Presumably you don't want to die? You may presume that I don't want all leave cancelled to arrange a high profile 'popular' execution in the middle of a city bursting with strangers and pilgrims for this implausible festival? Capisce?

Nada, zero, zilch. Suicide while of sound mind, I'd call it.

The dogs were running. Let them run or face a riot.

Water, please. I wash my hands of it.

Kindest thing I can do is make it short. Flog him to within an inch. Nail Him so there's no leverage – they suffocate in hours not in days.'

Post Scriptum:

'It seems a little unfair that my place in history should be in the Creed of this strange Faith. Or that I should, in my judgement, seem to have been put down as the man who judged the final Judge of all.

Not quite sure how to put this but, if you have a moment, of your mercy, pray for me.'