



MEDITATIONS FOR LENT by Father Robbie Low

**SECOND WEEK OF LENT – WEDNESDAY Jeremiah 20: 18-20/Mt 20:27-38**

Donald Trump, of blessed memory, wasn't the first man to spot 'FAKE NEWS' Nor will he be the last. In today's Old Testament reading we encounter Jeremiah's enemies plotting his downfall. Later, in the Gospel accounts of the Passion we will meet the enemies of God and of the truth, concocting falsehoods about Jesus. The media in 6<sup>th</sup> C. BC Jerusalem, AD 30 and today in Washington or Whitehall are no different. 'Let's listen carefully to everything he says then we can twist it. We can edit it carefully. We can decontextualize it so any nuance or subtlety is lost. We can convict him out of his own mouth.' How can we spin this story to do the maximum possible damage to our opponent? The aim, of course, is to get our 'own man' in.

Today's Gospel sees Mrs Zebedee, the stereotype, ambitious, pushy Jewish mother, trying to book her sons, James and John, the key Cabinet posts in Jesus' future administration and gets her comeuppance.

We often bleat that 'politics is a dirty business'. It is, in fact, a necessary business. It's what determines how we live and put our highest aspirations into practice. It's people, you and me, who make it dirty by demanding the impossible of those who represent us and, like the media, take no responsibility for delivering the good or delivering the goods and whose lives and words are not pored over for incompatibilities or disjunctions.

Fake news.....a free press can either be a bulwark of liberty or a tool in the hands of a privileged few to militate against the common good and 'get their man in.'

***Spiritual exercise:*** Say a prayer and light a candle for your MP – and send them a card to tell them you have done it.