Bishop Christopher's Easter Message - published in local newspapers

16th Apr 2012

My run up to Easter has actually been a long walk! I've been on a Pilgrimage beginning in South Warwickshire, circling Coventry on the Coventry Way, taking in much of North Warwickshire along the route. Many other pilgrims across Coventry and Warwickshire were following this or other trails through city and county. We all converged – hundreds of us – in Coventry Cathedral of the evening of Palm Sunday: the day that Jesus entered Jerusalem.

Our feet were sore by the end of it andmy boneswere certainly creaking. But I was glad to have been on my feet for so long and to have been walking at the same time of year as Jesus travelled on pilgrimage to Jerusalem. He did it every year, making the long march with fellow pilgrims to join in the Passover festival and offer their lambs to God in sacrifice at the Temple. But this time it was different. Jesus was heading to Jerusalem to give up his life for the world: to offer himself as the sacrifice for the sins of all.

We weren't going to Jerusalem's Temple but we were journeying to Coventry's Cathedral, 50 years old this Jubilee Year. When we arrived in the ruins of the old Cathedral each of us, in memory of Jesus' journey, banged a nail into a huge wooden cross. We then followed the cross into the Cathedral to be greeted by the great tapestry of the risen Christ. It was as if we had stepped from death into life, despair into hope, tiredness from a long, wearing journey carrying our troubles on our backs, into the freedom of forgiveness and the joy of new life.

May you find freedom and joy this Easter!

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