

Thoughts on the Daily Word

Ash Wednesday. Wednesday 18th February. Readings: Joel 2:12-18; Psalm: 50; 2 Corinthians 5:20-6:2 Gospel: Matthew 6:1-6,16-18.

I love watching a great series on BBC all about the ‘fibs’ of our history by Lucy Worsley. In the analysis we see how history is written by the victors and just how we believe these stories because they suit us, for various reasons. While I am sure something like this goes on in Jewish history there is still a powerful thread of self-criticism. It is usually the prophets who lead this movement, but it is also the scriptural writers who put it down in print form. A pattern that shows consistently throughout the Bible. It should be at the root of a healthy democracy but so often we prefer to just hear what suits us. In our polarised culture we probably need it even more so. This is why a national time of honest appraisal of ourselves is so important. It is much more than being critical of others, our culture, or the state. It is about us. What are our ‘fibs’ that shape how we face the world, ourselves and ultimately God. This is what Lent is all about, a chance to look at ourselves, as our ancestors in the faith did, honestly and with integrity. A big task.