

Easter ideals?

This week end Christians remember the brutal execution of Christ and the resurrection.

We read of him as a great figure. The Son of God to Christians, a great prophet or teacher to non believers. His words echo down the centuries. They are as fresh and relevant today as they were when uttered.

Some wrestle with difficulty with the great gap between the peace loving messages of Christ seeking to improve relations between people and to calm tensions and conflicts on the one hand , and the deeds of the Churches in their centuries of power and wealth on the other.

Sixteenth and seventeenth century Europe was ravaged by religious conflict as rival views of the Christian message were used to fight for money and political control. The Church Militant often struck a political pose, supported warring powers, and provided some of the most influential people and arguments to progress the conflicts and hatred.

Gradually the policy of toleration spread, though it took until the last century to arrive at proper religious toleration in most western countries. I welcome the way today in the UK the Christian Churches respect each other and seek to avoid conflict. Today politics in the UK is not primarily about religion. Mr Blair was strongly advised not to do God as PM.

In today's world there are still religious wars, and still too many incidents of religious persecution affecting several faiths. Sometimes the western allies intervene in these conflicts, with very mixed results.

In the UK we are left with an Established Church that does make forays into domestic politics, with some of its leaders urging their anti Brexit views on anyone who will listen. Often their main idea is that the state should provide a solution for every economic and moral problem. The private sector is usually something to tax and regulate to prevent or alleviate the alleged harm it does.