

## Intro

Kenneth Leech (1939 –2015) was an English Anglican priest and Christian socialist in the Anglo- Catholic tradition. He was the founder of **Centrepoin**t, one of the biggest programmes for the homeless and a former field officer for racial justice for the Church of England as well as a community theologian at St Botolph's Church in Aldgate, London. He authored many highly regarded books, including *The Eye of the Storm*, *True Prayer*, and the award-winning *Care and Conflict*. He was once described by former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, as



« a passionate advocate of a priestly ministry that was slow-burning, compassionate [and] detached from results and success”, a man who “in a society of confident marketised optimism ... was a passionate advocate of the people who carry the cost ».

## Text

Kenneth Leech, *We preach Christ crucified*, New York, Church Publishing Incorporated, 2005

Christ incarnate, Christ crucified, hangs before us as a perpetual sign of absurd, of the divine foolishness, a sign of contradiction in a world of sanity. And all our theology, all our prayer and life, must begin with amazement, horror and the absurd mystery of the crucified God (p. 13)

(...) So at the heart of the Christian community is the preaching of the crucified God. It is primarily an act of proclamation, not of elucidation. And this preaching is, at least, the proclamation that the healing of pain is a process within the heart of God and it is therefore a process which contains the seeds of victory. It is the rejection of a God who is beyond pain and feeling: the remote, impersonal « God of the philosophers ». It is a rejection too of the belief that the world pain's is beyond healing. There must have been a Calvary in the heart of God before it was planted in the hill of the Golgotha. The need for the cross can only be located within the nature of God if that cross is to be truly redemptive. God could only have been suffered on the cross if God was already that sort of God, a passionate, suffering God (p. 27)

(...) The cross of Christ then is not a call to either to resignation in the face of unutterable pain or to a life of masochistic pursuit of suffering, often called « the way of the cross ». It is a call to recognise solidarity with the Christ who confronted pain and death once for all and a call to minister to the wounded Christ as he is found broken and bruised on all the highways of the world (p. 31)

## Questions and ideas for prayer

1. How do you react when you see a representation of the crucifixion? Can you try to explain your feelings?
2. Who is for you the crucified Christ? Do you agree with the author or not? If not, why?
3. How do you understand the fact we are being called to preach the crucified Christ? How could you see yourself preaching the crucified Christ in your everyday life? How? To whom?