

Easter Message

‘He was a gentleman on whom I built an absolute trust.’

These words of wounded disappointment belong to King Duncan in Macbeth, but they could have come from Mollie in the final episode of the Traitors! For those who haven't watched it, it is a hit BBC show about truth, suspicion, and betrayal. The premise is simple: 22 contestants, one Highland castle, a series of challenges, and a potential shared prize of £120,000.

But there's a catch. Some contestants are out to eliminate the others and claim the money for themselves. These are 'the Traitors', and it's the job of 'the Faithful' to discover and vote them out.

As you can guess, I am a fan of the show! It is compelling. The combination of remote Scottish location in an eery, yet beautiful castle, with intrigue and deception is a heady mix.

But does it highlight a deeper truth?

We live in a world where social media suspicion is the norm and deception is assumed.

Who can we trust? That's the question behind The Traitors. And the show proves we aren't as good at lie detection as we think.

King David expressed the sting of treachery: 'Even my close friend, one who shared my bread, has turned against me' (Psalm 41:9). His words foreshadow the betrayal of Jesus by Judas Iscariot, the archetypal traitor.

But unlike the contestants in The Traitors, Jesus knew which friend would betray him. Jesus chose to faithfully love his enemy, giving Judas chances to change until the end. And when from the cross he said, 'Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing' (Luke 23:34), surely this prayer extended even to his treacherous disciple?

So who can we trust? Surely the one who suffers for us and doesn't resent us for it.

The Easter story of Jesus' death and resurrection ensures that broken bonds can be repaired. There is a bit of Judas in each of us. And yet, unlike Judas, we have the whole story laid before us. Today, we can make a choice to become a 'faithful' follower of Jesus.

In doing so, we can become like our Saviour, 'Faithful and True' (Revelation 19:11).

Revd Canon Simon Jones, Vicar St Michael's Stoke Gifford

