



Those of you who were able to join our parish weekend last autumn will recognise this little cross. It was made by Cathy Malins, who is a wizard with glass and her annealing oven, and given to our church to remind us of the things we had been discussing together. Cathy had taken a glass bottle, and dropped it so that it was just shards of broken matter, fit only to be swept up and thrown away. She then demonstrated what she was able to do with these pieces. We went on to consider what God can do if we let Him take our broken lives, our sadness's and disappointed hopes, our mistakes and foolishness, our altered circumstances and all the things we regret or mourn. He can make something new and precious from them. She cannot possibly have known then what was about to be unleashed on the world with this latest pandemic- but there are times when we fear that every part of our lives has been shattered-personally. As a society and even as a church community.

I learned recently of a young woman who suffered three colossal losses within the space of one year - bereavement, divorce and job loss. She said that the bravest thing she has ever done was to pick herself up and start again. Yes, great courage is needed, but we can also give God permission to take all the shards and make something new. A skilled craftsman, He is up, to, the job!

You may wonder why Cathy chose to make this rough looking cross, when she could have fashioned a smooth ornament of some beauty for us - but this is far better, speaking as it does of Christ's cross, with all that says of His great love for us, of His pain and self-giving for our sakes. That is surely a wonderful and beautiful thing. So, that little cross stands again in our church, even though we cannot be all together to see it. It is a symbol of our faith and trust that something good of His making will emerge from this chaos. I am reminded of a piece of graffiti that was scrawled onto the wall of a public toilet of a London railway station:

' God is alive and well, and working on something better'.      Yes!

*Ruth Tiller*