

3. THE DIVINE STORY

Dear God, I'm writing this with the memory of a London tower block that was gutted by fire. Hundreds endured smoke and fumes and some were burnt beyond recognition. Such a tragedy. And yet this is the world into which you make your quiet Advent, moment by moment, year by year. Your beloved Son endured as we do the pain of human life, and it cost him not less than everything. He endured the depth of human malice, but his love transformed it. The Gospel story reveals an astonishing expanse of love that encompasses our story of sin and evil, suffering and death. We are told that you *'so loved the world as to send your Son to save it'* (John 3:16). This was your Advent.

I can then imagine Jesus' life, death and resurrection as the outer edges of a great jigsaw: the inside pieces are the jumbled history of the world. Of course I can't yet see how most pieces can be fitted in: many of them, like the tower block, are twisted and distorted. Earth too is disfigured and wounded. But the outline of the jigsaw remains firm: because you love us limitlessly you defeat evil at a radical level. The tragedies of human life and of our Planet are being transformed into a new epic story, and in your good time we will be shown how you manage to make a masterpiece out of the mess we present to you. Strengthen this Advent hope in me.