

Reflection on the Gospel Reading 4th Sunday of Lent

There is a frightening amount of darkness in the world today. But the Gospel of this Sunday's Mass contains the wonderful words of Christ: *'I am the light of the world.'* Christ is indeed the light of the world and of our lives.

The question of human suffering was a big problem in biblical times and, as we know, still is a big problem. An Old Testament view saw a connection between suffering and sin. Sadly, this left them with a very negative image of God. Hence, when the apostles saw the blind man they immediately concluded that his blindness was the result of sin. So, hoping that Jesus would solve the problem for them, they asked him, *'Why was this man born blind? Who sinned? Was it the man himself or his parents?'*

Jesus said, *'Neither this man nor his parents, but in order that the works of God might be displayed in him.'* Thus he rejected the connection between suffering and sin. The man's blindness was not a punishment from God. God does not do evil. God does good. Jesus then proceeded to heal the man. So the man's blindness did reveal something about what God is like. It shows God's compassion in the face of human suffering. The disciples may not have found Jesus' answer fully satisfying, but it was the perfect answer to the blind man.

Today, our World in general, and our Country in particular, is being tested to the extreme. Yet, the suffering of others is an opportunity for us too – an opportunity to show care. We must try to make use of every opportunity that comes our way to do good. We shall pass through this world but once. Any good, therefore, that we can show to any human being, let us do it now; let us not defer it or neglect it, for we shall not pass this way again.

Deacon Ian