

Sunday Reflection

◆ **First Reading:** *Job 7:1-7*

◆ **Second Reading:** *1 Corinthians 9: 16-19, 22-23*

◆ **Gospel:** *Mark 1:29-39*

The first reading is from the Old Testament book of Job ; it's not exactly a reading that would lift your spirits ; Job, in his anguish says

IS NOT MAN'S LIFE ON EARTH NOTHING MORE THAN PRESSED SERVICE, HIS TIME NO BETTER THAN HIRED DRIDGERY? In the same reading his mood gets worse **LYING IN BED I WONDER "WHEN WILL IT BE DAY?".....RESTLESSLY I FRET 'TILL TWILIGHT FALLS....**

The book of Job, in it's entirety, tries to explore an age old human problem that is still with us to-day, the problem of human suffering.

Many people everywhere still ask that piercing question **WHY** does God allow so much suffering in the world?. The present Pandemic is a perfect example **WHAT DID WE EVER DO TO DESERVE THIS WORLDWIDE INFLICTION, THIS KILLER VIRUS??** Perhaps Mother Nature could step in with a daring response **"WHY SHOULD YOU HUMANS BE SURPRIZED WITH YOUR VIRUS?, YOU REAP WHAT YOU HAVE SOWN, AND WHAT YOU HAVE SOWN ON THIS BEAUTIFUL PLANET IS A VAST TRAIL OF DESTRUCTION"!!!!!!!**

To get back to that problem of human suffering!, seemingly a form of suffering comes to all of us to a lesser or greater degree at some stage on our journey thru' life. How do you make sense of suffering?

what meaning can we discover from it's stark reality? WHY did Jesus the Saviour end up literally nailed to a cross, crying out **MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?** The list of "why's" is never ending ; And yet God is not the "sender" of suffering no more than he avoided his own crucifixion and death on the cross.

Into which category does(or has) your personal suffering belong?
emotional?, mental?, physical?, addictive? or perhaps spiritual?

If there's no clear answer to the existence of suffering, then from where do we get HOPE?, because without HOPE the last flicker of light is extinguished, and when that happens the dark descends from within, but it doesn't have to end like that. How about handing it all over to the care of God UNCONDITIONALLY? which of course demands complete Faith and trust in the God and Father of us all ;

A lot of people have become strengthened internally for having put their unconditional trust in God, there is such a thing as having DIVINE ASSISTANCE in the midst of serious illness with death not far away, BE-HOLD! a peaceful properly prepared death ;

There is DIVINE GUIDANCE for those who see "no-way-out", they begged for help and got it ; On this issue, there is a lot to be learned from those who have "been-to-hell" and back, for example, the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous offers a 12-step-programme of recovery, No! you don't have to become addicted to alcohol in order to benefit from the 12 steps, but there is one particular step we can all put into practice if we choose to! Whatever our present pain in life is, we can put STEP 3 into action, and that step is

WE MADE A DECISION TO TURN OUR WILL AND OUR LIVES OVER TO THE CARE OF GOD AS WE UNDERSTOOD HIM

In the midst of human suffering in the world, so also in the midst of the weight of your own cross, there's a lot to be said for that STEP 3

which, if properly implemented, with complete unconditional trust in God, will bring to you and me ACCEPTANCE, SERENITY and HEALING, and when you think of it, this is all we need to get by.

This reflection did not set out to solve the problem of human suffering, it merely offers a glimmer of HOPE in seemingly hopeless situations ; But there is something we can do with what we have already grievously suffered in our lives(....presently, or 10 years ago or 20 or 30 years ago), and "what's that?" we can learn from what we have suffered and turn it into COMPASSION for others who have similar crosses to carry, as in, BE A LIFELINE OF COMPASSION to the ones close by whos' cross seems to be reaching breaking point, they're not far ; **BE COMPASSIONATE AS YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER IS COMPASSIONATE**, (Luke 6 ; 36).....

.....be well.....STAY HEALTHY.....Pray for the Homeless.....stop n' say hello to that person who lives alone(....and don't be discouraged by a negative response, you may not be aware of the type of cross they have to carry or have already carried.....)

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