

# 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent, year B

Biblical Reflections on the Readings: 2<sup>nd</sup> Chronicles 36:14-16. 19-13. Ephesians 2:4-10. John 3:14-2

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Today's gospel is spoken entirely by Jesus himself; it deserves our close and full attention. It is like a Manifesto, Declaration or Policy outline of exactly where he stands. He tells us why he has come, and how important it is that we listen to his words and believe what he says. Both statements are equally important because, knowing why he came, and not to respond with faith, is to bring condemnation on ourselves.

On a personal level verse 16 applies to us and seeks a response....it goes like this: *'For God loved me so much that he sent his only begotten Son so that, if I believe in him, I will not perish, but will have eternal life.'* In simple words, what does the word 'believe' mean? What does it mean in practice? Because Jesus said it, and I accept what he says as true, my life is different and will continue to change. In taking on board the implications of saying *'Yes, I do believe,'* we are saying that what Jesus says is the truth, and hence we must explore all the resources within His truth. In short, we will view the world and its people differently, and we will think differently, and act in accordance with the will of God. As St. Paul says in his letter to the Philippians Chapter 2, verse 5, *'In your minds you must be the same as Christ Jesus.'*

I suppose that we could say that our faith is in our feet! It enables us to step out with confidence, with the sure and certain knowledge that God will not let us down.

I am always amazed at many people in the Gospel who seemed to have the ability to listen to Jesus, believe what he said, and act on it. Then of course, there is the exact opposite; people who were spiritually blind and impaired by their hardness of heart, who would not even entertain the idea that God was doing a new deed in Jesus, and that in fact he was the fulfilment of the Old Testament Prophecies. The unique relationship that Jesus had with his Father was too much for some to bear, and the words which he spoke which flowed into his relationships with everyone, was far too radical!

Lent is moving swiftly along, and Easter is just around the corner. Now is the time to **STOP** and **CHECK IN** on our spiritual maintenance list: Are we spending more time in prayer? Are we being more alert to the needs of others, especially the poor? Are we making attempts to be more disciplined in our lives so that we can be unhindered in our loving and forgiving outreach to others? In the final analysis, it is entirely up to us. Reconciliation? Confession? Making time to join in our Parish Community Reconciliation.... let's face it, we are all in the same boat! TIME, TIME, TIME! This activity in Lent is PRIME TIME! The following might give us a kick start to seek Reconciliation....

*Selfishness:* this blinds us to the needs of others.

*Insensitivity:* this blinds us to the hurt we're causing others.

*Snobbery:* this blinds us to the equal dignity of others.

*Self-centeredness:* this blinds us to the beauty of the people around us, and their giftedness.

*Superiority:* this blinds us to the reality that we all eat our Corn flakes the same way!

*Pride:* this blinds us to our own faults.

*Prejudice:* this blinds us to the truth.

*Materialism:* this blinds us and makes us numb to spiritual values.

Food for Thought!

Fr. Kevin Walsh and his companion dog, Shauna

