

## Tuesday Reflection 18 August 2020

### *Eddie's Story - Part I*

*"Judge not ...*

Eddie (not his real name) is one of those on the margins of society whose cry Pope Francis calls us to hear.

Born into a broken home, he never bonded with his mother, and none of the men who drifted in and out of her life could be the father-figure he craved.

School was an ordeal to be endured; disinterested teachers, who had long since made up their minds about the charges entrusted to their care, were unable to see, let alone nurture, the intelligence and gifts which Eddie had.

And so he drifted from one dead-end job to another, got into bad company and sought escape in alcohol.

The upshot has been that now, in his early 50s, Eddie's body is racked with the effects of his alcohol abuse and nicotine addiction. He is unable to work, but at least he has a roof over his head in one of the sink estates to which the good citizens of Malvern turn a blind eye. He lives off benefit payments, and once a week was able to attend a local community centre, where he was met with the love that had been so lacking in his life. COVID-19 put an end to that, so he lives in enforced isolation without real social contact. When he was asked about the effects of lockdown, his reply was that it hadn't really changed his life all that much.

He is just able to drag himself to the nearest convenience store, where he can buy food of dubious nutritional value, but is unable to carry more than a day's supply. He had a mobility scooter, but that was stolen - from the grounds of Malvern Priory, of all places.

- *to be continued - when Eddie meets PIP.*

Michael Townson