

## NOT A SPECTATOR

Why is it that the terrible things that happen in the world seem so much worse when they happen just before Christmas?

The “massacre of the innocents” at that school in Connecticut;

the tragic death of a fine young man just a few miles from here – not known to me personally, but known and loved by many of my friends;

a dear friend whose longed-for baby lived just a few hours and died in her arms.

When we read or hear of such things, everything within us cries out “why?”

Many years ago there lived a man named Job. He suffered the loss of everything this world calls important – including all his children. His wife told him to blame God, his friends suggested it was all his fault anyway – “what did you do to deserve this?”

Job didn’t come up with any “ $a + b = c$ , therefore it’s all good” type answers, and I would suggest that anyone who tries to give you that kind of answer is kidding you and kidding themselves. What he said, in part, was, “I can’t accept all the good things in life as if they’re mine by right and turn around and blame God when bad things happen.” But Job also believed that, although he didn’t understand what it was all about, the God he found it easy to believe in in the good times was there for him in the bad times too.

Christians believe that Jesus coming into the world is God’s way of saying “I’m not a by-stander, I’m not just a spectator. I hurt when you hurt, I weep when you weep, your pain is my pain, you are not alone.”

Remember, as you sing those carols, that the baby who was born in a manger, died on a cross but that after the cross came an empty tomb.

Have a wonderful Christmas and please take care on the roads.

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