

TAKING REDEMPTIVE MEANING FROM MY SUFFERING

- I. Opening Prayer: Colossians 1:24-ff
- II. Salvifici Doloris
 - a. In the Passion of Christ, all human suffering has found itself in a new situation...The Redeemer suffered in place of man and for man...each one is called to share in that suffering, through which Redemption was accomplished.
 - b. “Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?” 1 Cor 6:15
 - c. How can we ‘make up what is lacking in Christ’s sufferings?’ It means that Redemption, accomplished through Christ’s satisfactory love, remains always open to all love expressed in human suffering. Thus, Redemption has been accomplished, while at the same time is always being accomplished!
 - d. ...thus, this Redemption, completed by Christ, lives on and in its own special way develops in the history of man. Hence the line, “For the sake of His body, the Church.”
 - e. “...in suffering there is concealed a particular power that draws a person interiorly closer to Christ...discovering the salvific meaning of suffering...and that he becomes interiorly a new person!” (p24)
- III. Sufferings that we Seek
 - a. St. Paul actually mentions the words, “Joy” and “Suffering” in the same sentence. (Col 1:24) Suffering uselessly is now overcome.
 - b. He also says in 1 Cor 9:27 that he pommels and subdues his body, lest he, too, be cast aside in the end.

- c. Rom 8:13 “If by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body you will live...” These two passages show the value of seeking voluntary acts of suffering, known as mortification.
- d. Further in that same chapter of Romans, Paul mentions that we will inherit and reign with Christ, provided we suffer with him.
- e. This is how we discipline the body and end the reign of fallen flesh; flesh that is ruled by the passions.
- f. Thus, self-denial in small acts of penance or suffering, done out of love, is a way to live out the Redemptive Suffering of Christ in our Flesh.
- g. This is what Jesus means when He says to “pick up our crosses daily and follow Him.”
- h. This form of suffering directly combats selfishness and sin. It reveals the depths of our love. It displays the new depths of our nobility and maturity because we can act without receiving immediate sensible gratification.

IV. Sufferings that we do not Seek

- a. This leads us to our next aspect of suffering: sufferings that we do not seek, which are often major in their seriousness.
- b. Part of the difficulty here is the fact that we sought it not, and yet, it found us.
- c. Not because of our own personal sins. But because we live in the valley of tears, and our Lord allows it. Yes, He allows it!
- d. He does not will our pain, only the great good that now comes from it.
- e. We can offer up both of these kinds of sufferings for others. Hence, they not only bring Redemptive value in our own lives, conforming us all the more closely to Christ; but can even be offered on behalf of others for their salvation!

- f. This is what it means to belong to the Mystical Body of Christ. READ 1 COR 12:12-31 (especially verse 26!)
 - g. And Romans 12:1; 4-5
 - h. Our sufferings, large or small, voluntary or involuntary, now receive new clarity. “God does not permit unnecessary suffering.” St. Therese of Lisieux.
 - i. “There are inevitably circumstances where we cannot understand the ‘why’ of God’s activity because it is no longer the wisdom of man, a wisdom within our capacity to understand and explain by human intelligence. Rather, it is Divine Wisdom, mysterious and incomprehensible, that thus intervenes. And happily we cannot understand!” (Jacques Philippe, Searching For and Maintaining Peace, p. 32)
- V. Sufferings that we should avoid: Anxiety! Matthew 6 and Phil 4:4-9
- a. Avoid worrying about the future.
 - b. Have faith and trust!
- VI. Our Lady of Sorrows
- a. Innocence and recollection increase suffering. Jesus thus suffered terribly.
 - b. Our Lady accepted the Father’s will in this.