

THE VALUE OF SUFFERING

By: Fr. Robert J. Fox

Our redemption, our salvation, has come through God the Son becoming man, suffering, dying on the cross, rising from the dead, and ascending into heaven to prepare a place for us. Why did the infinite God, creator of all out of nothing, will suffering for His love and mercy to redeem us? He, being God, could have redeemed us by simply willing it, as He willed to create each one of us. And even with His choice of suffering, one drop of His precious blood would have sufficed to redeem a million worlds.

But our loving Lord and Savior Jesus Christ willed to suffer intensely to the full—to the last drop of His most precious blood poured out for us. The holy angels are in utter awe at this mercy of God for mankind.

To which of the angels did God ever say, “You are my Son, today I have begotten you.” Or again, “I will be his Father and He shall be my Son.” And again when He leads his first born into the world, he says, “He makes his angels wings, and his masters flaming fire.” “Your throne, O God, stands forever and ever, a righteous scepter is the scepter of your kingdom.” (Hebrews 1:5-8)

There is evidence that the third of the angels on trial fell because they could not accept the will of God to become man rather than a mighty angel, whereas angels have a higher nature than man. Lucifer revolted, saying “I will not serve.” St. Michael rose up and said, “Who is like unto God?” They cast Satan and his devils into the pit of hell. No angel has ever had a sin forgiven. An angel can never change its mind. No angel has ever directly experienced the mercy of God. They experience mercy only through us.

“There is more joy in heaven over one sinner doing penance than over ninety-nine men who have no need of penance.” The good holy angels who so adore the mercy of God show us works to influence us to be open to His love and mercy, to unite our sufferings to those of Jesus Christ from whom all grace flows. The holy angels lead us to faith in God, to the incarnation of the Son, Jesus Christ; to His Church, His Mystical Body; to Mary, His and our mother, Queen of Martyrs and Angels. The angel speaks to us through the voice of our conscience.

With good reason did I years ago consecrate myself to my good holy Guardian Angel, and later when I discovered how—to all the good holy angels. The good holy angels enlighten us, and as agents of the Holy Spirit carry our offering to God in and through Jesus Christ. Let us use or invite the angels well and often. Our holy angel will be with us as our companion eternally and accompany each of us to our judgment before God. Get to know him now. Pray to your guardian each day.

There is much testimony in God’s word to the value of suffering: “I rejoice now in the sufferings I bear for your sake, and what is lacking of the sufferings I fill up in my flesh for His body which is the Church.” (Col: 1-24) The Holy Angels thus inspire us to unite all of our sufferings to those of Jesus Christ.

Christ Jesus, the Head of the Mystical Body, lacks no sufferings in Himself but the members of His Church need to accept their sufferings united to Him. We can and should suffer for others, and especially for the conversion of sinners, for holy priests and religious, and holy families.

When Adam sinned he committed an offense against God, not because mere man could do anything infinite. It was because the God he offended is infinite. Reparation must be made then by man who was the offender. How could man so finite, make infinite satisfaction to repair the broken bridge between God and man? God gave us the solution. The Son of God would become God Man and thus one with us being both, both God and man, would die on the cross to make infinite satisfaction to redeem us by Jesus Christ being the one essential Mediator to bridge heaven and earth again and unite man to God and God to man.

Jesus perpetuates and makes present, this same Sacrifice at every Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The Mass is thus of infinite value and the supreme means of reparation.

We should each day pray, “O Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I offer thee my prayers, works, joys and sufferings of this day, in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass being offered throughout the world.” There is never a moment of the day or night that somewhere in the world a priest is not offering the Holy Mass. Those who suffer and when they receive the Holy Eucharist and participate in Mass should remember to offer their sufferings united with the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross.

Sin brought suffering and death into the world. To reverse this and make suffering redemptive God so loved the world that he sent His only begotten Son into the world to suffer and gain infinite merits for us. Each of us in faith, hope, and charity must open our hearts and embrace these divine mysteries of Jesus Christ. It begins at baptism. We renew it, or Jesus does, at every holy Mass. Uniting our sufferings to Jesus is essential and brings peace and consolation.

The angel of Fatima, a year before the Mother of God appeared, said to the children, “Bring peace to your country in this way. . .above all, accept with submission the sufferings sent to you by our Lord.” On May 13th 1917, Our Lady asked the children to offer up to God all the sufferings He would send them in reparation for the sins by which He is offended and in supplication for the conversion of sinners. . .They answered “Yes.” Then she said, “For you will have much to suffer, but the grace of God will comfort you.”

I urge all suffering members to offer their sufferings for the conversion of our country and the holiness of family life. This offering is part of the Fatima Family Apostolate. I was encouraged to establish the Apostolate by the Vatican Council for the laity. Unless you do penance, you will all perish! We should offer all sufferings as penance for the reparation of sin. The following is encouraged:

1. Try to live the Fatima Message which includes:

- A. Pray the rosary daily, meditating on its mysteries.
- B. Unite your sufferings to Jesus on the Cross and to Him present in the tabernacle of the nearest Catholic church. Offer this to console the Hearts of Jesus and Mary and for the conversion of poor sinners.
- C. Offer Confessions and Holy Communions on First Saturdays, or near these days, in reparation to the Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

The nurse who is caring for me as I write this has done this kind of work for nineteen years. The nurse says about 50% fear death and are unhappy, not understanding how to suffer. This includes even believers who fear what lies ahead. But should we not rejoice to enter eternal life and behold the Beatific Vision, that is to “see God face to face, even as He is?” “God is Love.” Think! “To behold Infinite Love.” He died out of love for us. “Jesus, I trust in you.”

I know my time is limited. I rejoice to have been given months to prepare – even 82 years to prepare – by working as a priest to assist others in adoring, loving, and preparing. After 48 ½ years as a pastor in the diocese of Sioux Falls, SD, I rejoice that during the past 7 years I was invited to offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass daily in the lower church of the Most Blessed Sacrament Shrine. What a joy to worship with and evangelize the thousands who come here. And the good Poor Clare Sisters of Perpetual Adoration here, founded by Mother Angelica, along with the Eternal Word Television Network – are most powerful prayer and reparation warriors to make evangelical efforts fruitful; thus, many conversions happen here as people experience the Presence of God. I desire when God admits me to heaven – to spend heaven still evangelizing upon earth.

Prayer of a Suffering Member for the Conversion of One's Country

Dear Jesus, I believe in faith that you have permitted me to have this affliction of body because you love me. Your heavenly Father sent many sufferings upon you, dear Jesus, out of love for you and for all persons. You accepted your very great sufferings in reparation for the sins of the whole world. You had no sin yourself, dear Lord. Yet, you suffered more than all mankind. You felt the pain and the loneliness more intensely because you were so great in your Person, being God himself.

You have shown yourself to people in our own times with a Heart surrounded with thorns. Your Blessed Mother has shown her immaculate Heart also pierced with thorns. Both you, O Jesus, and you Mary, have asked that sacrifices be offered for the conversion of sinners. I thank you, O Jesus, for giving me a very special cross. By uniting my sufferings to those of you and Mary, I can help save souls.

Holy Guardian Angel of mine, I renew my dedication to you this day. Help me, my loving and holy companion, to bear my sufferings in union with Jesus crucified.

Lord Jesus Christ, our Savior, take my hand and place it in the hand of my Guardian Angel and make the Sign of Redemption over me.

I want to offer my sufferings and prayers for all married couples and young people so that they in their family life will be holy, pure, and close to you, Jesus Christ, my Lord, God and Savior. I offer you my sufferings for the conversion of my country. Amen.

Prayer for Families

Lady of the Holy Rosary, you appeared at Fatima with the Holy Family as a call for the holiness of families. You asked that the Rosary be prayed daily.

We (I) offer this Rosary for all families. We (I) ask that families be brought to holiness through an increase in faith, hope and charity, and the frequent reception of the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Holy Eucharist.

Lady of the Rosary, Mediatrix of Grace, Mother of the Church, intercede that the peace and grace of your Son, Jesus Christ be present in all our families. Amen.

“Act of Love of the Holy Parish Priest of Ars”

I love you, oh my God, and my only desire is to love You until my last breath.

I love You, infinitely loveable God, and I prefer to die loving You than to live a single moment without loving You.

I love you, oh my God, and I only fear going to hell because there I will never experience the sweet consolation of loving You.

Oh my God, if my tongue is not able to say at every opportunity that I love you, I want at least my heart to repeat it to you as many times as I take a breath.

My God, give me the grace of suffering out of love for you while I suffer. Give me the grace of one day breathing my last out of love for you and the same time feeling how much I love you.

The closer I come to my final end the more I beseech you to intensify and perfect my love for you. Amen.

To obtain the Fatima Family Apostolate Charter write to: Fatima Family Apostolate for the Suffering, Box 269, Hanceville, AL 35077