

SUFFERING - (2)

How to Make the Greatest Evil in Our Lives Our Greatest Happiness

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(continued)

PENANCE

We must all do penance for our sins. If we do not, we shall have long years of suffering in the awful fires of Purgatory. This fire is just the same as the fire of Hell.

Now, if we offer our sufferings—the very little ones as well as the greater ones—in union with the sufferings of Jesus Christ, we are doing the easiest and best penance we can perform. We may thus deliver ourselves entirely from Purgatory, while at the same time gaining the greatest graces and blessings.

Let us remember clearly that:

1. Sufferings come from God for our benefit.
2. When we are in the state of grace, we derive immense merit from every suffering borne patiently even the little sufferings of our daily lives.
3. God will give us abundant strength to bear sufferings if we only ask Him.
4. If we bear our sufferings patiently, they lose their sting and bitterness.
5. above all, every suffering is a share in the Passion of Our Lord.
6. By our sufferings, we can free ourselves in great part, or entirely, from the pains of Purgatory.
7. By bearing our sufferings patiently, we win the glorious crown of martyrdom.

Of course, we may do all in our power to avoid or lessen our sufferings, but we cannot avoid all suffering. Therefore, it is clearly necessary for us to learn how to bear them.

In a word, we must understand clearly that if we remain calm, serene and patient, suffering loses all its sting, but the moment we get excited, the smallest suffering increases a hundredfold.

It is just as if we had a sore arm or leg and rubbed it violently; it would become irritated and painful; whereas, if we touch it gently, we soothe the irritation.

We suffer from ill-health, from pains, headaches, rheumatism, arthritis, from accidents, from enemies. We

may have financial difficulties. Some suffer for weeks in their homes, some in hospitals or nursing homes. In a word, we are in a vale of tears. Almighty God could have saved us from all suffering, but He did not do so because He knows in His infinite goodness that suffering is good for us.

PRAYER

We have a great, great remedy in our hands, that is, prayer. We should pray earnestly and constantly, asking God to help us to suffer, to console us, or if it pleases Him, to deliver us from suffering. This is all, all important.

A very eminent doctor, in an able article he recently published in the secular press, says that "Prayer is the greatest power in the world."

He says, "I and my colleagues frequently see that many of our patients, whom we have failed to cure or whose pains we have failed to alleviate, have cured themselves by prayer. I speak now not of the prayers of holy people, but the prayers of ordinary Christians."

We should above all pray to Our Lady of Sorrows in all our troubles. We should ask her, by the oceans of sorrow she felt during the Passion of Our Lord, to help us.

God gave her all the immense graces necessary to make her the perfect Mother of God, but He also gave her all the graces, the tenderness, the love necessary to be our most perfect and loving Mother. No mother on earth ever loved a child as Our Blessed Lady loves us. Therefore, in all our troubles and sorrows, let us go to Our Blessed Lady with unbounded confidence.



THE MEMORARE

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thy intercession was left unaided. Inspired with this confidence, I fly unto thee, O Virgin of Virgins, my mother. To thee do I come, before thee I kneel, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer them. Amen.