

Suffering That Liberates Us



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More than any other religion, Christianity has given meaning to the suffering inherent in human nature. In fact, it is present in every person's life, in one way or another, and it was particularly present in Marie-Paule's life of love, for her Life is the one of the Co-Redemption, the ultimate example of the value, the usefulness and even the necessity of suffering, after the one of the Redemption.

However, the subject of suffering can be dealt with from different angles because it is a broad and complex topic. It quickly becomes obvious, though, that it consists in two main "components": suffering on the personal level and what it brings to the person who is suffering; and suffering on the collective level and what it brings to the community within the context of the communion of souls.

On the Personal Level

On the personal level, suffering is a path leading to the knowledge of self, to the liberation of the person and to fulfillment in God.

"To suffer passes, to have suffered well remains for ever." This well-known sentence is from Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus who borrowed it from the Venerable Louise-Marie de France; and Marie-Paule herself wrote: *"To suffer passes, to have suffered well endures."* (*The Stone Rejected Has Become the Keystone*, p. 65)

What a great mystery in those simple words! Life here below cannot

unfold, in fact, without there being sufferings of one kind or another. However, these sufferings, be they physical, moral or spiritual, must not be perceived as punishments that stop us or against which we rebel at times. On the contrary, they are powerful tools to liberate our innermost depths, to get to know ourselves and to advance spiritually.

It is in that sense that the expression "to have suffered endures" must be understood because all we have acquired through it does not disappear, whereas the suffering itself ends up, most often, by passing.

However, whether the expression comes from Marie-Paule or from Saint Thérèse, an element is added to it which makes a significant difference: *"to have suffered **WELL** endures"* or *"remains for ever"*. But what do those two words "suffer **well**" really mean?

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We must admit that when we have to face very painful and big ordeals, we rarely have the feeling of having "suffered well". At best, we live those moments as best we can, and,

at worse, we feel rather devastated, crushed under the weight of our difficulties, our misfortunes, our helplessness...

But that is precisely when a key moment can be lived. In fact, if we accept to have to live such purifying moments – which is like dying to ourselves, that is, to our "ego-self" –, then we make room in ourselves for a power that is greater than we are, the power of mercy of the God of Love who carries us in His arms to lead us to a new shore. Moreover, does not the French word for mercy – *"miséricorde"* – come from the Latin *"misereo/cor(dis)"* and does it not mean "heart that is attentive to woes"?

In fact, that is more or less what "to suffer well" is: to acknowledge and accept. To acknowledge, first of all, the reality of our weaknesses and our limitations, and then accept to let ourselves be transformed. We must detach ourselves from our certainties that are blind at times, and from our faults which we often boast of as our qualities. In other words, we must strip ourselves of our old being with its "heart of stone", in order to become a new being, whose heart is transfigured with light and in the process of divinization.

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Through suffering generously accepted, a sort of miracle occurs when we touch our littleness and our nothingness, because suffering shatters our shell in order,

finally, to allow fulness to enter in. And who or what can be fulness more than Him who is Life, Love and Light!

As soon as we make room in ourselves, the divine Light penetrates there and enlightens us by enabling us to see ourselves in all our reality. This is the starting point for a better and genuine knowledge of self in all our components: physical, psychic and spiritual, without forgetting the Spirit of God "deposited" in the heart of the heart of our being.

In fact, knowing that we are in the likeness of God or of the divine Immaculate in the Creator Couple leads us to become aware of the sacred nature of our being. From that moment, our way of perceiving changes and we see more clearly that which, in our attitudes and our behavior, must be improved in order to correspond fully to the sacred treasure in us, this spark of divinity that is intended to completely transform us.

In the lives of the saints and of the great spiritual figures of all times, there is always such a turning point, a reversal that is called conversion, when the awareness of the potential of the divine spark transfigures their life for ever. They can then no

longer live simply for themselves, feeling instead that pressing duty of making this spark develop into an immense fire.

On the Collective Level

On the collective level, from the viewpoint of the communion of souls, suffering lived well and “transcended” leads to pure Love.

The souls that let themselves be enkindled by Love in this way reach the point of living only for It, through It and in It. Then, the sufferings experienced acquire a co-redemptive potential. In fact, in a mysterious and marvelous communion of souls and through the infinite mercy of God, the merits accumulated by certain persons can be applied to others like a surplus of graces, bringing pressure to bear so that their hard shell may finally be pierced and then receive the necessary assistance to free themselves from their chains.

Thus, Marie-Paule gives us the most excellent example in *Life of Love* of suffering offered up out of love to awaken souls, to free them from themselves and make them ascend to God. None of Marie-Paule’s sufferings were useless and God alone knows their variety, their number and their burden. Already in 1956, she wrote: “*I have suffered so much for souls that, on the day of the great harvest, I wonder if there will be enough*

arms to present them all to the Lord.” (*Life of Love* I, p. 226)

This harvest is looming on the horizon; it will be grand and unprecedented because it will be the one sown by the Lady of All Peoples in her huge field of love! All those who believe in her and walk in her footsteps will be the few laborers for tomorrow’s abundant harvest. In thanksgiving, they will be able to present to God a whole blossoming of regenerated souls, that is, souls that were re-born, thanks to the “*Mother of all souls*”.

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In the wake of the Co-Redemptrix, we should then not seek suffering for itself, but accept it when it enters our life in whatever form it is presented to us and use it to go to God by detaching ourselves from our “self”.

Let us remember too that everything God has us experience is made to measure in keeping with our capabilities. God is Love; He is not a torturer. If He sometimes sends us a very heavy trial, that is because He wants us closer to Him. Sometimes the road is very rough?... Let us not forget that the reward is worth the trouble because when there is nothing left, there is still Love... and to possess Love is to possess everything!

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Discovering God’s Will

(...) So many marvelous things are being prepared right now for the Kingdom to come! And how privileged we are to benefit from so many graces granted by the Lady, provided that we accept to see and acknowledge them.

Moreover, would it not be beneficial for us to implore the True Spirit more often, asking it to help us better discover God’s present will for us and do as Mother Paul-Marie did, that is, recognize with joy and confidence the graces God grants to the souls He has chosen?



Should we not react “supernaturally” rather than “humanly” when God leads His Church of Love along new paths while arousing love and humility in souls? The channel of grace is open and

the day will come when hearts will open up to the Wisdom of the Holy Spirit that will put humanity back within God’s plan of love.

In her maternal goodness, Marie-Paule knew that “*grace refers all things back to God, who is their Source. Grace is not presumptuous and attributes no good to self; neither does grace argue or prefer [its] own opinions, but submits to Eternal Wisdom.*” (*The Imitation of Christ*, Book 3, Interior Conversation, chap. 54, no. 16)

The same was true of the dispositions of heart of our Mother, and it is also in this way that it would be good to perceive the origin of the actions and interventions of the Church King whom she appointed to serve her. So, there is no need to be surprised over the “new form” towards which our faith must tend, for it is in fact the Lady – God even – who, through the celebration of the renewed Eucharistic sacrifice, is exhorting souls to change their point of view.

Until now, there was the Last Supper, this incomparable apex of graces, when Jesus gave to men the gift of His Body and His Blood. Today, Marie-Paule

Co-Redemptrix joins Jesus Christ the Redeemer in the same consecrated Bread and Wine. All our faith, all the worship rendered to the Divinity is condensed in this supreme Reality.

Yes, God planned everything, prepared everything to bring about a “general restructuring” of life on Earth, in Love and through the new Eucharist. Conscious of our duty in these tragic hours in which the world is “purified” by the fire of Love, why not live as a time of grace the extraordinary time we are living?

“*That is how Mary Immaculate prepares the Kingdom of Christ the King by multiplying the children of light, bringing together the consecrated and the faithful as one single heart and one single soul, as in the time of Pentecost, so that the time may come – the most wonderful ever lived on earth – when God will reign as the King of Love,*” with Mary Immaculate, our Mother and Queen of all Hearts. (Sister Jeanne d’Arc Demers, *The Grace of Being Sons and Daughters of Mary*, no. 63, p. 16)



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