

Fr. Rito's Homily

5th Sunday in Ordinary Time
February 4, 2018

12:15 PM Mass (in Spanish) and 5:00 PM Sunday Youth

Today, the word of God comforts us and tells us how to assume the sufferings in our lives. All human beings have sadness or pain at some point in life. Sometimes, we experience pain due to illness or because a relative's death and no longer share our earthly life with us. Today, we find in the readings an answer, as Christians how we should assume the suffering. When the Christian assumes pain, it is not because he or she likes to suffer, but rather to make from pain a path of sanctification.

As human beings, we ask ourselves about the meaning of suffering and life. Saint Paul encourages us to assume human responsibility with hope. Assuming suffering, imitating the example of Christ, contributes to our redemption and purification of our sins. Saint Paul also unites suffering with compassion. To unite us in solidarity with everyone to win them all, not for the Church or for a group, but for Christ. St. Paul teaches us that we must become weak with the weak so that the grace of God may be manifested in them.

In the book of Job, Job reveals his experience of suffering. Job is a figure of what happens with our lives. The book of Job is not a historical book, but one of poetry and Wisdom. This book contains three periods in Job's life: when he is rich and fortunate, when he is poor and abandoned, and when he is once again blessed by God.

Today's text presents us Job when he is poor and abandoned. This experience is repeated many times in our lives when we are discouraged and life does not make sense, when we have lost hope and the joy of life, when the personal or other pain broke our hearts. As Christians, we overcome these experiences when we look at Jesus. In Jesus, we find the answer to pain and suffering. When Christians accept pain and, with humility, present our suffering to God, then pain purifies us and saves us. All sufferings can be overcome when we trust in God.

In Christ pain acquires a transcendental meaning of hope for our lives. Christ was not indifferent to His own pain and the pain of others. When Christ was in the Garden of Gethsemane, He felt the pain of suffering invading His life, but He never lost His trust in the Father. Jesus in suffering is faithful in the fulfillment of His Father's will.

Jesus, confronting His pain and the pain of others, showed a compassionate and merciful heart. Jesus was always open to alleviate the pain of the sick and to give freedom to those who were afflicted by evil.



Jesus shared His compassion with Peter's mother-in-law. He held out His hands and helped her to stand up so that she could stand for herself. We find in this action of Christ two verbs: to rise and to serve. Rise remembers the mystery of the resurrection. Christ rose from the grave. Peter's mother-in-law with her attitude teaches us, where to take our faith, gratitude and love and that is to serve Christ. Once she was healed, she responded with service to God.

Job was questioned about the evil that tires and weakens his life. The Answer is in Christ. Christ does not want evil, but fights against it and heals all those affected. Jesus, also showed compassionate with the sick and healed them. What a great lesson Jesus left us, caring for the weak and the sick. They remain the neediest of God and require our care.

Jesus taught us that to overcome pain, prayer is necessary. After Jesus made a day of work, He went away to solitary places to prayer and spend time alone with His Father. Without prayer we cannot overcome the bridge of pain. Without prayer, we cannot understand the meaning of suffering. Our suffering acquires meaning so we unite it with the sufferings of Christ. In prayer, we open our hearts to God, we reveal our weaknesses to God. When we pray let us ask of Him to help us be strong and faithful to His will. Prayer is communion with God and sharing with Him who we are and what we have.

So that suffering does not destroy our inner life, we have to be in communion with God. Jesus is our example. He prayed often and afterwards, He went out to preach the good news of the Kingdom and to be united with the weak broken by pain, suffering or illness.

Our responsibility to Christ is to offer His message of love and compassion to all. The example of Jesus should make us all His faith-filled and merciful disciples, to help to alleviate the suffering of others and to allow our own sufferings to purify our hearts. To follow Christ as a faithful disciple you and I have to know how to suffer and to know how to love as Christ lived it with his own life.

May God grant us the grace to continue accompanying our sick brothers and sisters. May God give us a compassionate heart to help the elderly who cannot stand on their own. So that they may find in our hands the support they need.

We all need God. And everyone needs our help. We give thanks to the Lord, for giving us the opportunity to serve Him in the weakest and neediest of today.

Fr. Rito's Homilies are on our parish website:
www.EmmausParish.org.

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