

Elements of Devotion to the Flame of Love of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Embracing Suffering and Other Sacrifices

Why All The Suffering?!

- “The devotion is great but I don’t get all the suffering”
- I had missed the single largest topic in the Diary!
- p87: Jesus: “You suffer, do you not? Suffer for Me. This is My gift. You can only receive suffering like this from Me. Whether the suffering is spiritual or bodily, accept it from pure love for Me. You know what I told you: We must go up to Calvary. May our feet journey together. And if you are feeling alone, I permit it only so that you receive merits that you can offer for your faults and for souls consecrated to Me.
 - Do not be frightened by the suffering that frequently comes upon your soul. I do this to get you accustomed to sufferings. By these, we walk together and gather together.”

Why All The Suffering?!

- p38: Mary: To receive great graces, your soul must be prepared by greater sufferings. This is the only way to increase grace in your soul. . . . This test [attacks from Satan] was an opportunity to gain merits for others. Make constant sacrifices for the twelve priests because they, too, will suffer. Be happy that you can suffer with them.”
- p40: Mary: “Just live in hidden humility and be consumed in suffering. I, the Mother of Sorrows, feel as if, with each of your sufferings, you pour medicinal balm upon the wounds of my Divine Son.
 - Be a soul which cannot live without sufferings. By their union with the sufferings of my Divine Son, these souls increasingly feel His closeness. Desire with all your heart that my Flame of Love be lit quickly and blind Satan.”

Why All The Suffering?!

- p97: Jesus: “My little one, did I send you many sufferings in these past few days? I implore you, do not grow weary of these great pains. Endure them for your family and those of the whole country. You know that Satan, foaming with rage, wants to destroy families. Let us suffer together. I suffer united to you and you to Me. I love you very much and I will not leave you without sufferings. Embrace suffering. Love only Me, serve Me with fidelity, and do not be surprised that I always manifest My love through sufferings.
 - The excessive love of My Heart makes Me consider you worthy of sufferings. This is the only way you can save many souls. You are a mother of a family and you are aware of the several forms of family disintegration. To save families, throw yourself into the furnace of suffering. Oh, how much sinning is done against Me by destroyed families! Make reparation and suffer for them. Do not lose the least opportunity. May our thoughts be in unison. Consider clearly the value of your sufferings. The number of those reaping with Me is so small. Do you know why? Because there are no souls willing to bear sufferings, especially those who would do it steadily. Without it, they cannot merit that I shower My graces on them continuously.”

Love and Suffering

- We are coming to perhaps the highest hill of the devotion
 - N.B. it isn't "endure" or "survive" suffering but "embrace" suffering
 - Nothing new – James 1:2
- Perhaps the most important as it puts all the "practices" in context
- To understand the role of suffering, we must understand love
- We can't understand the Flame of Love unless we understand love
- We so misunderstand love!!
 - We spent a year on this in the Foundations of Bible Study series
 - Super condensed version
- The Rom 8:7 challenge – Why not?
 - Boil it down – Matt 22:36-40, Rom 13:10
 - Do only Christians love?
- The linchpin scripture – Phili 2:3-8 (NASB)

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God's Selfless Love Versus Human Love

- Two ends in life – Love and Self
 - The opposite of Love is Self
- The World misunderstands love – self-fulfillment vs. self-sacrifice
 - The romantic dinner
 - The one is sustainable; the other isn't
- We must repent not only of our overt evil but of most of our good
 - If we love "because", it is not God's love
 - Because:
 - I want to get to Heaven
 - I want to be happy
 - I receive more than I give

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Christians Also Misunderstand Love

- “I love them with ‘Christian love’”
- “Love is an action and not an emotion”
- That’s responsibility, not love
- Jesus didn’t say serve your enemies but love your enemies (Matt 5:44)
- Jesus thirsts for, seeks, and gives His life for the terrorists, the pedophiles, the drug lords, the gang members, the rapists
 - Do we?
- Forgiveness is essential for eternity in Heaven
 - Will we meet our abuser?
 - We must forgive not to be forgiven but for love of them (Matt 18:34)
 - “I can’t! I just can’t” - I know; it’s impossible

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The Impossibility of God’s Selfless Love

- Conundrum in the prayer closet
 - I want to be selfless for totally selfish reasons!
- We can’t; we call that original sin – the way we are – our nature
- That’s why we need a Savior
 - A Savior is someone who saves us from an overwhelming power
- Christianity isn’t a religion – not about doctrine or knowledge
- Christianity is a miracle – the transformation of the very nature of what we are from human to divine (II Peter 1:4)
 - we call that sanctifying grace

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How God Makes The Impossible Possible

- The transforming of our natures from human to divine is the role of the Holy Spirit – Titus 3:5-7
- The Holy Spirit makes us capable of loving as God loves – Rom 5:2-5
 - The Glory of God – Eph 3:19 – filled with all the fullness of God, Col 1:27, I John 3:22
- Why? So we can love God and each other with the same love God has loved within Himself for all eternity
 - So that we are capable of inhabiting eternity
 - Selfish love is not sustainable

Love, Freedom, and Suffering

- How does the Holy Spirit transform us? I Cor 2:9-11
 - Hearing in stereo! Which voice is God's?
 - The one that leads to love rather than self
- Thus we no longer love “because” but simply because we are love (I John 4:8)
- This is how we love all including those who hurt us
 - This is how we inhabit Heaven
- Love, Freedom, and Suffering are inseparable
 - For love to be perfect, it must be perfectly free
 - The freedom of love is built in the crucible of suffering
- Year long study – Foundations of Bible Study series
 - <http://www.elmontbiblestudy.org/foundations/>

The Levels of Christian Growth

- Deep topic so let's take another approach
- Our understanding of Christianity is sometimes woefully immature
- Levels of Christian Growth
- Foundations Series focused on Transformational Christianity
- Flame of Love takes us straight to Purgative Christianity and beyond
- The *experience* of Purgation brings us to Illumination
 - We see by experience, not knowledge

Unitive Christianity	
Illuminative Christianity	
Purgative Christianity	Dark Night Soul
	Dark Night Senses
Transformational Christianity	
Relational Christianity	
Mechanical Christianity and Unbelief	

Rocket To Sanctity

- Can we see the wonder of what Mary is doing in the Flame of Love?
- She is rocketing us to the life of heavenly holiness on Earth
 - The greatest outpouring of grace and the blinding of Satan
 - A key to taking this from just another beautiful Marian devotion to the rocket ride to holiness is this element – embracing suffering
 - Why? Because love is learned by experience more than knowledge and the experience of embraced suffering teaches true love
- In this life, Love, Freedom, and Suffering are inseparable
 - That's why a loving God placed us in a suffering world

God For a Day

- If we were God for a day, what would we change?
 - End war? Domestic violence? Take away all sickness and suffering?
- Isn't that telling God that we know how to do His job better than He does?
 - The world is exactly the way it needs to be today
 - It does not need to be this way tomorrow
- For God judged it better to bring good out of evil than not to permit any evil to exist - Saint Augustine - Enchiridion ch.8
- So let's see if we can understand why God does not remove all suffering from the world
- Let's see if we can embrace the plan steeped in suffering

Salvific Suffering

- God ordained suffering to be salvific so we can learn the love of God necessary for an eternal existence by experience in our bodies
- It is a gift
 - Saint Faustina, Divine Mercy in My Soul, 1804:
"If the angels were capable of envy, they would envy us for two things: one is the receiving of Holy Communion, and the other is suffering."
- When we understand the gift of suffering, we are ready to understand the indispensable role of embracing our suffering in the Flame of Love devotion

Embracing Suffering and The Flame of Love

- Perhaps the most emotionally challenging element
- The one that brings us to the deepest trust in God's love for us
- The greatest proof to ourselves and others that we love as God loves
- The way that builds the permanence of our love
 - p87: Jesus: "You suffer, do you not? Suffer for Me. This is My gift. You can only receive suffering like this from Me. Whether the suffering is spiritual or bodily, accept it from pure love for Me. You know what I told you: We must go up to Calvary. May our feet journey together. And if you are feeling alone, I permit it only so that you receive merits that you can offer for your faults and for souls consecrated to Me.
 - Do not be frightened by the suffering that frequently comes upon your soul. I do this to get you accustomed to sufferings. By these, we walk together and gather together."
 - p47: The spiritual dryness had lasted for so long and my misery had kept me tied to the ground. I accepted this willingly because it was for the good of my soul.
 - James 1:2-4

Seeking Suffering and Sacrifices

- Suffering is something to be sought for ourselves and alleviated for others
 - p97: Jesus: "My little one, did I send you many sufferings in these past few days? I implore you, do not grow weary of these great pains. Endure them for your family and those of the whole country. You know that Satan, foaming with rage, wants to destroy families. Let us suffer together. I suffer united to you and you to Me. I love you very much and I will not leave you without sufferings. Embrace suffering. Love only Me, serve Me with fidelity, and do not be surprised that I always manifest My love through sufferings.
 - The excessive love of My Heart makes Me consider you worthy of sufferings. This is the only way you can save many souls. You are a mother of a family and you are aware of the several forms of family disintegration. To save families, throw yourself into the furnace of suffering. Oh, how much sinning is done against Me by destroyed families! Make reparation and suffer for them. Do not lose the least opportunity. May our thoughts be in unison. Consider clearly the value of your sufferings. The number of those reaping with Me is so small. Do you know why? Because there are no souls willing to bear sufferings, especially those who would do it steadily. Without it, they cannot merit that I shower My graces on them continuously."

Seeking Suffering and Sacrifices

- P40: ANNOUNCE MY MERCY – SACRIFICE YOURSELF
 - Jesus: “I choose you, My little one, to be the bearer of My Divine Mercy. Fill yourself with the abundance of My Divine Mercy and when you open your mouth to speak, proclaim the mercy of My Heart burning with desire for sinners. Let your whole life be a burning desire to take part in My work of Redemption through prayer, sacrifice, and desire.”
 - “. . . serve Me with greater surrender. Do not let the power of routine take control.
 - Let your sacrifices always be fervent. I would like to increase my graces in you. However, to do that, I need greater acceptance of sacrifices. Accept My plea, be very humble and renounce every pleasure which does not serve Me. . . .
 - I want you to increase your fasts if you accept. Do not give yourself to any pleasure. Let your breakfast and your afternoon meal be bread and water. You can have other foods only at your principal meal, but make them tasteless. Do not eat to please your taste but only to nourish your body.”
- Phil 3:8-11

Seeking Suffering and Sacrifices

- We seek sacrifices even to the point of creating our own
 - p58: Mary: “My little Carmelite, intensify your desire so that my Flame of Love will be put into action. Make even greater sacrifices.”
 - It is with these very words that she spoke to me. She also repeated them on the feast of her Visitation.
 - Mary: “Offer me greater sacrifices. Do not ask how, just improvise!”
 - Because of her request, I ate only bread and water and a little fruit for nine days. When she asked a second time, I deprived myself of water on various days.
 - Experiment, learn by doing
 - We may make mistakes
 - Showers, Floor

Seeking Suffering and Sacrifices

- We don't run away from them – we run into them
 - “When the world was hushed to silence at the turning-point of night, Lord, your almighty Word leapt down from the royal throne” – Advent and Christmas antiphon
 - What did Jesus leap into?
 - Poverty, Infanticide, Refugee, Calvary
 - Are we ready to leap from our place of comfort into the salvation of the world?
 - “Your all-powerful word from heaven's royal throne leapt into the doomed land” – Wis 19:15 NABRE
 - p71: Mary: “My Divine Son unites your humiliations to His sufferings, which are of eternal value. And now, prepare your soul and body for still greater sufferings, in whatever way and measure they come upon you. Do not retreat, be humble, patient and persevering.”
 - When the Blessed Virgin said this, a great anguish oppressed my heart. She had announced at other times that I would suffer. However, this time I trembled within...
 - “My beloved Jesus and loving Mother, I have great fear concerning the sufferings and humiliations that you warn me about. Without you, I am nothing. Hold me tightly.”

Seeking Suffering and Sacrifices

- We do not just endure sufferings; we embrace them – James 1:2
 - p266: NOVEMBER, MONTH OF THE SUFFERING SOULS - November 1-2, 1965
 - The Lord Jesus flooded me with extraordinary sufferings which grew greater at night. I was bent over when I walked. Also, a fear of death took hold of me. I had never experienced this in all my life.
 - The next morning, I felt a relief which increased throughout the day. Suddenly, the Lord Jesus spoke again.
 - Jesus: “My Soul, do you believe that I love you very much? I used this violent suffering which you have endured for the suffering souls. Now, I smile upon you.”
 - At that moment, I felt as if my soul separated from my body. The Lord Jesus spoke again.
 - Jesus: “God smiles upon you. You see, with My divine smile, you can easily endure the great and violent sufferings. The souls in purgatory need your sufferings so much because you now share in the work of the Church Suffering. Suffer with a smile! Let no one know, let no one see, this is a secret between the two of us. Only God grants this and I give it only to the souls who know how to endure ceaseless sufferings with a smile.”
- Suffering is a gift – Phili 1:29

Embracing Suffering And Grace

- p38: Mary: To receive great graces, your soul must be prepared by greater sufferings. This is the only way to increase grace in your soul. . . . This test [attacks from Satan] was an opportunity to gain merits for others. Make constant sacrifices for the twelve priests because they, too, will suffer. Be happy that you can suffer with them.”
- P123: Jesus: “Your great and violent sufferings have exhausted you. Why are you surprised? Did I not prepare you for this? Beforehand, I gave you great graces. These gave you strength for the great sufferings, and now, because you have endured these great sufferings, I can fill you with a greater abundance of grace. Each time, I multiply and intensify these great sufferings in your soul. Then I strengthen you with the grace of perfect abandonment so we both have success. The rage of Satan is savage. I permit him to be unchained against you so he can see how great is the power of My grace in a soul that is abandoned to Me.”
- Job - Job feared rather than loved God – Job 1:4-6, 3:25
 - His great suffering corrected his distorted relationship with God – Job 42:5-6

Embracing Suffering And Grace

- p131: Jesus: “Although I will intensify and increase your sufferings, I will also add a grace to strengthen you and give you courage. I see that you make good use of the grace of abandonment. Try never to lose this wonderful grace which completely dominates your soul. Make every effort to use it in all that follows. Satan knows it very well, and he wholeheartedly wants to divest you of this grace. It is I who permitted this for him to see what surrendering to Me can produce in the soul.”
- p179: Jesus: “To you! What will I not grant to you! As you have asked, I will increase My graces. Through your sufferings, you have widened your soul. Now, everything I want to give you fits in your soul. Each sacrifice is a new bank deposit in Heaven that you will bring with you. Through Me, the multitude of souls will receive its interest after your death.”

Embracing Suffering And Grace

- p234: Jesus: “The water of My graces, like a stream, flows continually into your soul. Now is the moment to tell you why these abundant graces remain in your soul. By your sacrifices, you have dug a deep channel and the water of My divine graces, with its purifying power, has found a place in your soul. If you had not prepared this deep channel by your sacrifices, the purifying water of My graces would have drained off.
 - Do not grow angry, My Elizabeth, if I want to console you but that My words end up as complaints. This does not come from Me, your understanding heart leads Me to complain. Oh, how many, many souls receive My abundant graces, but they are not prepared, and the purifying water of My love drains out. Their souls lose this grace. How this hurts Me! But I will stop complaining because I must strengthen and prepare you for the battles that await you. The water of My graces have found rest in the channel of your soul. So now, the drops of oil squeezed from your sufferings float on top of the fountain of My graces. See how your drops of oil are shining upon the mirror of silvery water! They shine like pure gold.”
- p42: Jesus: “My little Carmelite, you have accepted all the sacrifices that I have asked for lately. Perhaps you are surprised but I must thank you. Do you see how your Master is so condescending? Yet, I will go still further. Unite your sufferings totally with Mine. Then your merits will grow greatly and they will move My redemptive work ahead. Keep this great grace you have received from Me in the depth of your soul. It is a special gift from God. He honors you, poor little soul. Can he give you anything more sublime? Learn from Me. I chose you because you are small and miserable. Never tire of suffering for Me. With the help of My grace, dedicate yourself even more.”

How Does Grace Enable Embracing Suffering?

- Because it makes us think, feel, act, and be like God
 - P97: He promised to give me special strength for every trial and told me to keep trying.
 - Jesus: “The main thing is to fight continually.”
 - Although He spoke of many things, I could not record them all. Experiencing such goodness, my heart was moved. I said to the Lord Jesus: “My Jesus, You know that my soul is ready, but my flesh is weak.” He filled my soul with the strength of His grace. Then He spoke to me, just as we humans speak to each other.
 - Jesus: “You see My riches. I need you and I enrich you. Therefore, may our hands gather in unity since our thoughts are one and our souls are in harmony.
 - You can see how intimate our prayer is. My little one, when I will be able to speak with many, My complaining words will be less frequent. I ask you to take advantage of every opportunity to ask our heavenly Father that more would know Me. For many, this is not easy, but they will experience difficulty only until they get very close to Me. Once they are beside Me, all will be easy because love makes sacrifices easy to bear.” - James 1:2

How Does Grace Enable Embracing Suffering?

- Trying to protect ourselves because of a lack of humility blinds us to the power of suffering
 - p153: Jesus: “All of you must discard your false humility that keeps you away from Me. I say this because you stay far from Me by claiming that you are not worthy. Really, your sins cause you to starve for My love. So, make yourselves worthy by repentance. To you, I say: Suffer for them, especially when the suffering seems so dark. Let all come to Me with confidence. Suffering is dark only when you are close to earth. My little one, are you beginning to understand?
 - At your birth, I wrote about suffering in the story of your life and I will continue to write it until your final day. But I give the light of My grace so you can see its value. The closer you come to Me, the more I will enlighten you with My brightness. When you arrive in Heaven before the Most Blessed Trinity, you will see the value of your sufferings that will last forever and never become obscure. There, I will reveal them to you like a movie, filled with merits and wonders. This transformation united with My merits and the Spirit’s illumination will plunge your soul into the most beautiful ecstasy.”

Love And Humility Make Sense of Suffering

- Forsaking self and loving other – true sanity
- We learn this love by experience
 - p277: Jesus: “Look, the Word became Flesh.”
 - No matter what I tried, I was not able to grasp the significance. The Lord Jesus drew my attention to this reality. “Even now, adorable Jesus, I cannot grasp this miracle.” The Lord Jesus continued:
 - Jesus: “I am not surprised, My little one. I reassure you, no one has understood this great miracle until now except My Mother; for to understand it, it is necessary to accept suffering also. It is only through suffering that the soul can understand the great miracle of the Incarnation of the Word. Through the consummation of the sacrifice, will be clarified in your soul what I did for you, for all.”
 - Eph 3:19
 - We are not ready for Heaven until we willingly embrace the voluntary poverty of the Incarnation and the voluntary suffering of the Cross

Love And Humility Make Sense of Suffering

- This is why the Purgative phase comes before the Illuminative phase
 - p279: Jesus: “Do you wonder how you can see and comprehend the divine mysteries with so much clarity? Only can see them is the one whose sight is one with My divine gaze, and whose thought is one with My thoughts. My Elizabeth, many of the divine mysteries you’ve been experiencing on account of my divine clarity in periods of ecstasy, strengthen you across the suffering that you must bear for the salvation of souls. I know you suffer with joy and I will continually strengthen your availability for sacrifices since I know you will need it and those I have sent you to, with respect to our holy communications. You must make sacrifices on their behalf.

We Suffer In Love For Salvation Of Others

- p95: Meanwhile, a great feeling of anguish filled my inner being, which is the suffering the Lord gives in order for me to reap souls along with Him.
- P83: Jesus: “I teach you so you learn and teach others how to gather souls. The will of the soul is love, and love can do everything. You must just desire with all your strength. May our thoughts be always in unison – to save souls from eternal damnation. Only in this way can you lessen My cruel sorrow. Let that not be boring to you. I have repeated it to you over and over: Suffer with Me.”

We Suffer In Love For Salvation Of Others

- P104: Jesus: “Be My little sunflower and turn toward Me your oily seeds which mature in the rays of the divine Sun. Do you want your oily seeds to be greater each time? Then accept every sacrifice I offer you. Only in this way can your oily seeds be useful. Do you want Me to squeeze your seeds so the oil comes out? We can do this only through sacrifices.
 - These drops of oil squeezed by your sufferings will fall in the empty lamps of souls, and the fire will be lit in them by the Flame of Love of My Mother. By its light, they will find the road that leads to Me. This drop of oil squeezed out by your sufferings, when united to My merits, will fall on those souls who still do not have a lamp. They will be astounded and will seek its cause, and they will find the road that leads to salvation.”
 - (Editor’s note – Those without lamps are pagans who do not yet have light of true faith.)

We Suffer In Love To Ease Jesus’ Suffering

- Does this seem strange?
 - Loss of souls grieves Him so our suffering to save souls lessens His grief
 - p152: Jesus: “Always give Me new and abundant sacrifices. I am sowing in your soul the seed of My graces, My holy doctrine. Cultivate it in your soul by your prayers, mortifications, and a continual acceptance of sacrifices. Do not forget how painful for Me is the fate of the seeds that fall by the roadside. . . .”
 - p52: Early this morning, when I finished my second hour of night prayer, the Savior said in a pleading voice:
 - Jesus: “My little one, suffer with Me. Feel what I feel! Relieve My sorrow.”

Our Failure To Embrace Sacrifice Wounds Jesus

- p232: Jesus: “Listen to Me, and do not be surprised that I have complained for some days even about pious souls. Unfortunately, I have a serious reason for that. I want you to atone for them also, because pious souls who make no sacrifices hurt My Heart even more. Oh, how sad I am to see the multitude of devout souls living a pious life without earning much merit on behalf of their eternal salvation. So many of them do not attempt to come close to Me in any way as though they’re afraid. The sorrow for their sins does not stem from love.
 - Write down My words, or better, My request to those who are indifferent: there is no progress without sacrifice. I am not happy with a sterile piety. It is like a tree that produces no fruit. I will add this, My Elizabeth: the pious people who are like this do not even think at what point their soul is gray and dark. The light of grace only penetrates and illumines the soul burning with love to the degree that they expose their soul to the transforming effect of My grace.
 - Do not be surprised that I speak in a severe tone of voice. This severity springs also from My love. I would like them to take at heart My words and that they prostrate themselves before Me in an atoning adoration and a repentant heart. For it is also a habit of pious souls to think that after having spent a good time at their devotions, they have already given to God what is God's.
 - Oh, you fools! If you could only feel the immense pain your pious indifference causes to My divine Heart. I am the Victim and it was not by pious attitudes but only by a continual acceptance of sacrifices that I brought about My redemptive work. Repent! Repent! Repent! This is what I am asking you. The voice of repentance reaches up to the throne of My heavenly Father. It is the voice holding back the arm of justice of My Father.”

We Suffer In Love to Bring Joy To God

- p159: Jesus: “Suffer with courage, perseverance and a sincere abandonment. Don’t ponder if the suffering is large or small. All that you can still do for Me on earth is meritorious. Time is short, little sister, and never returns. What you do not accept at a given moment will never again become available to you because I think that you would not receive it willingly. On everything you do place the mark of your love and the seal of your decision. Do everything with a selfless love. In this way, you will joyfully share in My work of Salvation.
 - Every small drop of suffering accepted from sacrifice and love delights the Most Holy Trinity. In the company of the Trinity, you will enjoy it. This will be your reward which is not from this world.”

We Suffer In Love to Bring Joy To God

- Does this seem strange?
- God sees differently (Is 55:8-9) - Matt 16:21-24 (NASB)
 - It is no accident that this is followed by the Transfiguration
 - It shows that Jesus has all power and His sacrifice is voluntary – John 10:17-18
 - God's reticence to enforce His will and commands in our lives likewise open the door for us to give Him great joy as we validate His trust in us and, I suppose, great grief when we fail His trust
 - We see the same interplay of command, love, freedom, and trust in Philemon 8-9,14,21

We Suffer For Our Own Good

- P262: So that others can understand the conversation, first I must write about what happened in the family. In a short period of time, two grandchildren were born. One on August 22, feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and the other on September 8.
 - And so, for my little strength, the work was excessive. I felt that I could not carry on. I begged the Lord in His kindness to give me strength because I could not manage to help my two daughters-in-law. When I awoke the next day, I possessed an amazing vitality. I worked all day with no tiredness. This lasted for two weeks. This extraordinary strength, I realized, distanced me from the Lord. I even thought that if it continued this way and if I remained in this great physical shape, I could even go back to work. I entertained these thoughts because I had regained my bodily strength. Then the Lord Jesus spoke.
 - Jesus: “Now, you will understand even better why I stripped you of your bodily strength. You see, while you were weak, you served Me with all your strength. Now that I have increased your strength, you do not serve Me as before. Your thoughts are distracted and you give Me less time. Moreover, you do not stay with Me as you did before. As to the length of time and strength, it affects Me much less. This strength will remain just a few days before I take it away. I only gave it for the good of your family.”

We Suffer For Our Own Good

- P143: My little daughter is sick. I thought of going to the doctor to know what to do. The Lord calmed me down.
 - Jesus: “Do not go anywhere. It will be for the good of your daughter if she is not cured.”
 - These words depressed my heart because she has a husband and a child. The Lord Jesus also told me why He would not cure her.
 - Jesus: “Your daughter always has temptations. By a long sickness, I will fill her with abundant graces. Her soul will be purified of the great temptations and, from now on, she will undergo sufferings with patience.”
- It this is what it takes, bring it on!

The Suffering That Helps Us Helps Others

- This becomes a virtuous cycle
 - p269: Jesus: “My light permeates you and surrounds you. Through Me, you enlighten in the obscure Advent these souls awaiting Me. The sacrifices of your life, united with My merits, will be light for them. I said, ‘You are the light of the world’ to those whom I filled with the special light of My grace. You and others must give light to the dark parts of the earth which are in the shadow of sin, such that My divine light attracts towards the true road those souls teetering in the shadow of sin and death.”
 - Today, I meditated all day on the Lord’s words, and I thought especially of these: “The sacrifices of your life, united with My merits, will be light for them.”
 - p275: Jesus: “On the chords of your soul, I play the melody of repentance. Upon hearing this melody, even the obstinate sinner will convert. This melody comes from all the suffering you accept. It is the melody of your accepted sacrifices whose sound penetrates souls, and through it, you make reparation for sinners.”

The Suffering That Helps Us Helps Others

- p236: Jesus: “Are you suffering much? Let your sacrificial suffering not stop! Do you know why? The same way I let the darkness of doubts and the spiritual anguish come over you, to the same extent I will put light and relief in the souls who are going to set into motion what I am communicating through you.
 - My Elizabeth, suffer with heroism, with perseverance and constancy. From time to time, I will lift the veil that hides My divine will. I will show you My satisfaction, so you can receive strength from time to time for your soul to be filled with the abundance of My divine grace that you must pass on to others, so that they praise and glorify God for His infinite goodness.”
- p280: Jesus: “Each tear drop that the suffering draws from your eyes will fall upon the souls of sinners and bring forth their tears of repentance.”

Suffering Accelerates Grace

- Perhaps more than anything else, embracing suffering rockets our soul toward sanctity
- p160: Jesus: “No matter how painful, accept this suffering. You are receiving graces that other souls would only receive over a period of several decades. Be very grateful for that.”
- This is because it is the acid test of love
- Love, Freedom, and Suffering are inseparable
- It is Jesus living in us – Col 1:24
- Note the rapid change in Elizabeth – 1961:
 - p9: I said to the Lord: “O Jesus, You have me here. I have separated myself completely from the world, just as You wanted, so that absolutely nothing can come between us. Do I please You? O my God, how miserable I am! How much these sacrifices have cost me! Do You know how humiliating it is to live this way?” Then I heard the Lord’s voice in me.
 - Jesus: “You must live this way from now on, in the greatest humiliation.”
 - Hearing these words, my soul was plunged into His eternal thoughts. I asked, “Do You now accept me?” The Lord did not answer but my soul experienced a great silence. Bowing my head, I was only looking at Him. What will He say to me? I felt this self-surrender had moved me closer to the Lord. Nothing disturbed the silence in my soul. While kneeling, my soul was filled with profound repentance and gratitude towards Him. I awaited His words more than ever.

Suffering Accelerates Grace

- 1965:
 - p259: [The context is Jesus changing Elizabeth's sufferings from doubts to a burning desire for the salvation of souls] I do not want you to think that I am possessed by melancholy. This would go against my happy nature. Nevertheless, a silent withdrawal dominates my soul and I feel as if I did not belong to the earth. This happened on other occasions also, but the Lord Jesus said that now it will continue until the end of my life. Since then, I have used greater surrender and greater fidelity in keeping the fasts requested by the Lord. As to the night vigil, which before cost me the most, I have now doubled it.
 - The Lord Jesus had first asked me to make a one-hour vigil twice. Now, by the grace of God, since the fire of charity is burning me, I have neither night nor day. All that I could do for the Lord seemed so small. I spend each night in prayer from midnight to 5:00 a.m. Then I go to church where I continue my adoration. Then, at the Holy Mass of 7:00 a.m., I receive the sacred Body of the Lord. I spend the day helping my family. All during this time, the Lord's presence fills me to such a degree that my soul is lifted above my bodily activities, because my soul remains next to the Lord without any interruption.

Our Suffering Has Great Value

- p153: Jesus: "All of you must discard your false humility that keeps you away from Me. I say this because you stay far from Me by claiming that you are not worthy. Really, your sins cause you to starve for My love. So, make yourselves worthy by repentance. To you, I say: Suffer for them, especially when the suffering seems so dark. Let all come to Me with confidence. Suffering is dark only when you are close to earth. My little one, are you beginning to understand?
 - At your birth, I wrote about suffering in the story of your life and I will continue to write it until your final day. But I give the light of My grace so you can see its value. The closer you come to Me, the more I will enlighten you with My brightness. When you arrive in Heaven before the Most Blessed Trinity, you will see the value of your sufferings that will last forever and never become obscure. There, I will reveal them to you like a movie, filled with merits and wonders. This transformation united with My merits and the Spirit's illumination will plunge your soul into the most beautiful ecstasy."

Our Suffering Has Great Value

- p93: Jesus: “When you are in Heaven and from up there you contemplate the death of one of your children, you will be by his bed. Your drop of oil will fall on the empty lamp and the Flame of Love of the Blessed Virgin will be lit. This great outpouring of graces will save souls from damnation. They will experience your motherly hand caressing them. Also, **you will feel the great power which your many sufferings possess**. These souls will also experience your hand which will help them at the moment of death. They will see your meritorious life on earth which they do not now appreciate.”
- Are we glad that it hurts for the value it brings?
- Jesus refused the wine mixed with gall and myrrh (Matt 27:34, Mark 15:23)

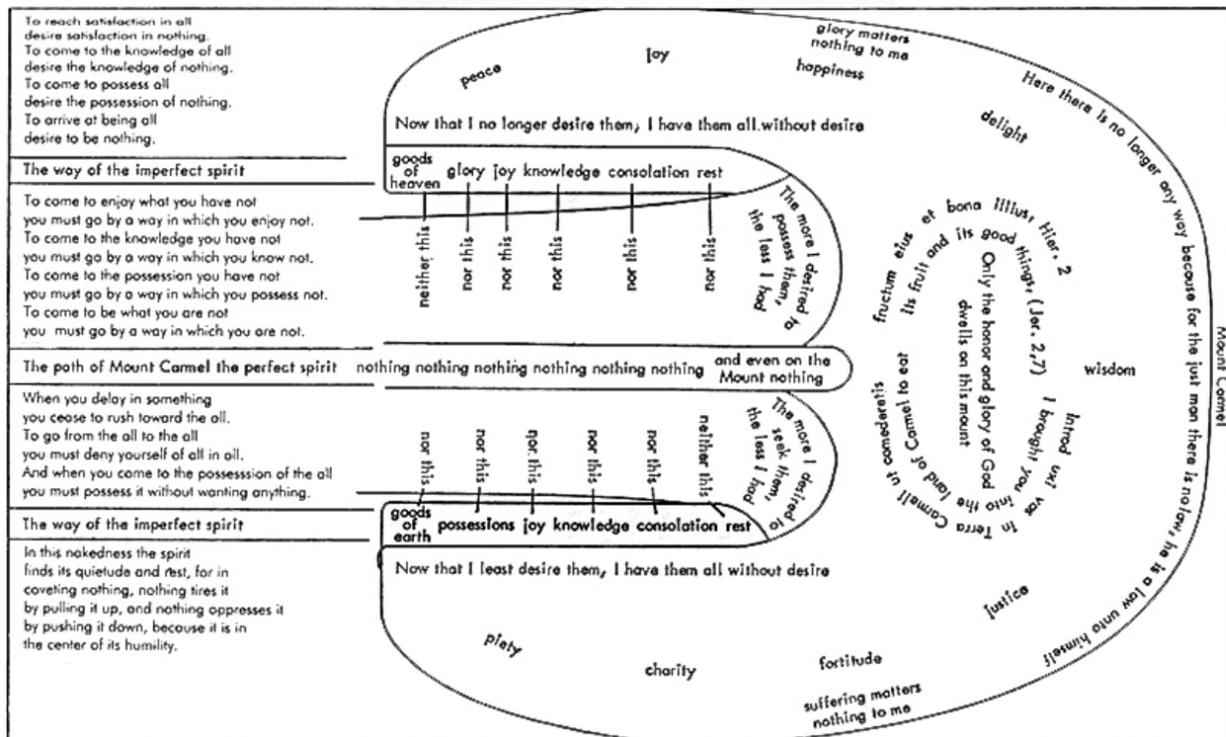
Essential For The Goals Of The Flame Of Love

- p215: Jesus: “Only through sorrows and sufferings does My Holy Cause make progress.”
- p236: Mary: “. . . my Flame of Love will blind Satan. I have placed this Flame of Love in your hands, and soon it will reach its destination, and the flames which spring from my love will quench the fire of hell. My Flame of Love, with its unimaginable light and beneficent warmth, will wrap the earth. To accomplish this, my little one, I need sacrifice, your sacrifice and the sacrifice of many such that the minds and hearts where the infernal hatred is burning may receive the soft light of my Flame of Love. . . . The greater the number of souls who sacrifice and watch in prayer, the greater the power of my Flame of Love on earth will be.”
- p164: Jesus: “I told you that whoever knows something about the Flame of Love of our Mother can only deserve being worthy of serving our Cause through sufferings and humiliations.”
- p254: I am either a fool and a liar or what is happening in me is true. If it is true, then I cannot stand around with my arms folded while souls are perishing. I cannot be frightened by this question of blinding Satan. I must make whatever sacrifice is demanded.

Partaking In The Work Of Redemption

- p208: When I entered my small room, I greeted Him, "Praise be Jesus Christ." With the lightest of sensations, He made His presence known. This lasted just a few minutes. Then He filled me with a heavy anguish and a sorrow filled with worry. He did this so much that I had to hold onto something not to collapse. The Lord spoke with sorrow.
 - Jesus: "I have you partake in My suffering of Soul and Body just as I had to as a Man. I did not use the power of My Divinity, it was only as a Man that I lived the horrors of the night of Gethsemane. I honor you with the extraordinary pains in My Body and Soul. In truth, this suffering means that you participate more deeply in My work of Redemption."
- The brokenness of the world is not the problem – it is the tool – Rom 8:18-20

What Does the Path to this Great Grace Look Like?



What Does the Path to this Great Grace Look Like?

- The Ascent to Mount Carmel is not a picnic
- It is the complete destruction of ourselves – Luke 9:23, Gal 2:20
- This comes through suffering
- Like climbing a sheer ice mountain and being left on a ledge waiting for God
- We abandon even our spiritual comfort
 - p207: Jesus: “Place your head on My Heart and let this nearness fill you with strength for your future battles. I do not want to console you because you suffer from joy, and whoever suffers from joy does not want to be consoled. I give you My divine strength, you certainly need it. The sacrifice that I await from many is made only by a few. This translates into a setback for My work of Redemption.”

Spiritual Detachment

- p33: Jesus: “Be loyal, do not seek consolations. Renounce yourself and love only Me.”
- p59: Mary: “The past days have brought you many sufferings, is this not true? You have many doubts whether making so many sacrifices that demand such efforts is useful. I gazed at you with joy. So you could gain more strength and make even greater sacrifices, I did not want to console you amid your doubts. I will obtain a great grace for you.”
- p37: Now, since the Lord Jesus deprived me of both His words and His presence, a great dryness was consuming my soul. As I knelt speechless, I remembered the Lord’s words:
 - Jesus: “One Our Father or one Hail Mary prayed in the midst of spiritual dryness is much more fruitful than exuberant prayers of someone who abounds in spiritual favors.”

What Does Great Grace Look Like?

- Conformed to the image of Jesus – Rom 8:29
- Naturally pouring ourselves out for others - I John 3:16
- A living martyrdom – white martyrs
 - p88: Jesus: “My little Carmelite, your continual sacrifices give witness to your continual fidelity to Me and to My work of Salvation. These make you walk on the path of martyrdom. Do not fear, our feet journey together, and even though you grieve, let us continue walking together. I am giving you abundant graces, My little one, because My Heart overflows with love and prompts Me to be lavish. I fill each of your efforts with graces that are a thousand times greater. Would that many souls loved Me as you do. What great joy I would experience if I could give to many souls the abundant graces which I give to you.”

Perfection Of Love In Suffering Becomes Our Desire

- p135: Jesus: “My little one, never leave Me without your sufferings.”
 - For several days, He repeated this many times. His words gave birth to a very passionate desire in my soul. I longed so much to suffer. Right before Communion, He unexpectedly said:
 - Jesus: “Beginning today, I will allow continuous suffering in your soul, which will go beyond all that you have suffered until now.”
 - Great happiness filled my soul. Finally, His desire will be fulfilled. He had already asked if He could place me in the furnace of sufferings. Now, by His grace, I will be able to do this. “Now that you have arranged for continual sufferings in my soul, after many obstacles and in spite of them, I have finally come to You. Now, finally, I thirst being close to You...”
- p142: Jesus: “I will increase your sufferings until martyrdom.”
 - “O my Mother, most holy sorrowful and immaculate Virgin, I give you thanks. By the effect of grace of your Flame of Love, you gave me the great opportunity to merit.” The joy of that moment lives continually in my soul. O come, blessed suffering, by which I can give my life for the Holy Cause.

Perfection Of Love In Suffering Becomes Our Desire

- p249: Jesus: “Be very strong. I will not increase your level of suffering.”
 - I was astounded by these words. I will not receive more sufferings? “My adored Jesus, does this mean that You are withdrawing Your love from me? This saddens me even more.” And I sorrowfully complained to the Lord Jesus. “Suffering for me is when I do not suffer. Now, how can I come before You? Your love, made as one with sufferings, dominates my soul and now, it will not dominate it anymore. What will happen to me?” My heart became heavy and I asked the Lord: “Adorable Jesus, why do You treat me this way? Do I not merit sufferings? Am I not strong enough to undergo them?” I complained to the Lord Jesus for a long time. Again, He spoke.
 - Jesus: “I see that you did not understand Me. Until now, I gave you as many sufferings as your human strength could undergo. From now on, I will not increase them because you have already reached your limit. There is no room left in your heart and soul. I repeat, persevere and be at peace, you are the vase full to overflowing with the sufferings you have received. Besides, I will not lessen My love but I will not increase your suffering. I already told you that I will not spare you. You must suffer until your last breath.”
- p251: There is always a great and continual longing for God in my heart. I accepted life, death and suffering according to His Holy Will. This filled me with such felicity words cannot express it. My heart throbbed with happiness.

Perfection Of Love In Suffering Becomes Our Desire

Saint Teresa of Avila, The Interior Castle, VII:3

“ . . . the soul has a great desire to suffer, but not the kind of desire that disturbs it as previously. For the desire left in these souls that the will of God be done in them reaches such an extreme that they think everything His Majesty does is good. If He desires the soul to suffer, well and good; if not, it doesn't kill itself as it used to.

These souls also have a deep interior joy when they are persecuted, with much more peace than that mentioned, and without any hostile feelings toward those who do, or desire to do, them evil. On the contrary, such a soul gains a particular love for its persecutors, in such a way that if it sees these latter in some trial it feels compassion and would take on any burden to free them from their trial, and eagerly recommends them to God and would rejoice to lose the favors His Majesty grants it if He would bestow these same gifts on those others so that they wouldn't offend our Lord.

You have already seen the trials and afflictions these souls have experienced in order to die so as to enjoy our Lord. What surprises me most of all now is that they have just as great a desire to serve Him and that through them He can be praised and that they may benefit some soul if they can. For not only do they not desire to die but they desire to live very many years suffering the greatest trials if through these they can help that the Lord be praised, even though in something very small. If they knew for certain that in leaving the body the soul would enjoy God, they wouldn't pay attention to that; nor do they think of the glory of the saints. They do not desire at that time to be in glory. Their glory lies in being able some way to help the Crucified, especially when they see He is so offended and that few there are who, detached from everything else, really look after His honor.”

Perfection Of Love In Suffering Becomes Our Desire

- p258: Jesus: “. . . . Now I will change your sufferings. I will no longer send you the torments of doubts. Once and for all, until the end of your life, the fire of charity will burn you. In your longing for souls, this fire will consume the strength of your body.”
 - Because the Lord Jesus had not yet given me this new suffering, I did not understand His words about the fire of charity that will burn me, and the strength of my body that will be consumed in my longing for souls.
 - After a few days, I felt as if a burning arrow had been thrust into my soul. By this suffering, souls must be saved from damnation. Since then, I do not even know myself. How can I understand? I am this burning fire of charity but I cannot describe it. Some feelings are exclusive secrets between the soul and God.

It Must Be Our Free Choice

- p150: Jesus: “Do you know the greatest suffering? To be misunderstood. This is the greatest torment. This will also be the sorrow of your soul, even until death. I endured it also during My entire life. You should not be greater than I, My little one. May our souls be in harmony and our lips beg together our heavenly Father.”
 - Suffering keeps my soul in great dryness. During these moments, suffering seems senseless and even slightly dull.
 - Jesus: “I must give you a gentle reproach. How hard it is for you to comprehend the value and the meaning of your sufferings! Suffering is truly meritorious only if the soul accepts it with a full self-giving.”
 - “You know, my Jesus, what You are asking is beyond me. My soul seeks continuously to serve You, but my body is in continual battle. In spiritual dryness, I can never see God’s Holy Will clearly.”
- N.B. Elizabeth’s vacillation – 10 pages earlier, she was exulting in suffering
 - This is not easy

This Is Our Life From Now On

- p9: I said to the Lord: “O Jesus, You have me here. I have separated myself completely from the world, just as You wanted, so that absolutely nothing can come between us. Do I please You? O my God, how miserable I am! How much these sacrifices have cost me! Do You know how humiliating it is to live this way?” Then I heard the Lord’s voice in me.
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This Is Our Life From Now On

- This does NOT make us sad, worn, beaten, and morose
- Quite the opposite!
 - p69: Jesus: “Be My servant! Be always joyful! Every day that you serve Me must be a feast. Do not let anyone or anything that disturbs your cheerful spirit come near your soul. Take good care of your nuptial garment and let it radiate happiness. Wherever you go, let it be felt that you partake every day in the heavenly banquet.
- James 1:2, Acts 5:40-41, Rom 5:3, Col 1:24 – notice the associated emotion – JOY
- Now, that which gives others grief gives us joy – love has changed everything
- Everything has meaning and that meaning in love gives us joy

Embracing Our Sufferings And Sacrifices

- For love to be perfect, it must be perfectly free and the freedom of love is forged in the crucible of suffering
- Rejoice in the freedom of our love and the salvation it brings
- Free of self, suffer gladly to bring salvation to others
- In Love and Joy, let us pour out our lives, let us embrace our sufferings for others; let us take up our cross
- In us, let Jesus live!