



THE DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE

# Office of Human Life, Family and Bioethics

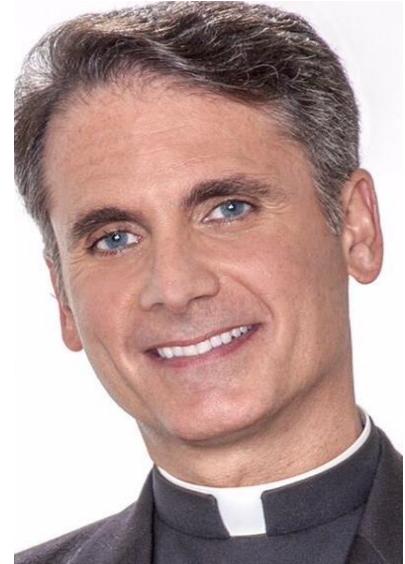


## Giving God Our Yellow Dandelions Redemptive Suffering

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Our merciful and good God has given all of us the priceless gift of life. As Catholics we know that every life is sacred because Jesus died for every soul. The desire of the Lord's heart is that every life, every soul be saved. With that said, what do we do to assist the Lord in His desire for the salvation for all? How can I help those I don't even know come to salvation?

In the scriptures, Colossians 1:24, St. Paul says: *"I am glad I can suffer for you. I am pleased also that in my own body I can continue the suffering of Christ, for His body the Church."* What is St. Paul referring to? Redemptive Suffering!! May our suffering, whether freely chosen or not, help others when united to the sufferings of Christ. Rather than my suffering closing in on myself which causes me to feel: Why me? How come me? Poor me! If I unite it to Jesus' suffering for the salvation of others it brings purpose to my suffering. How does it, literally help someone else? That is in God's hands, that is the mystery of the power of love that is released into the world.



In the following church approved apparition of 1931 when Jesus appeared to St. Faustina Kowalska in Cracow Poland as the Divine Mercy, she writes in her diary, paragraph 1032: "*During Holy Mass, I saw the Lord Jesus nailed upon the cross amidst great torments. A soft moan issued from his heart. After some time, He said, I thirst, I thirst for the salvation of souls. Help me, my daughter, to save souls. Join your suffering to my passion and offer them to the Heavenly Father for sinners.*" This message is in keeping with the church's teaching on redemptive suffering and St. Paul's scripture stated above.

St. John Vianney, the Cure of Ars, said: *"Suffering not offered up to God is wasted suffering."* He took on many sacrifices for the salvation of others especially fasting. He used to hear confession between 12 and 14 hours a day. He would give penitents a very light penance and most times he would do the penance for them. This was a sweet offering of love to the Father for the salvation of souls.

In 1917, three children (*Lucia, Jacinta and Francisco*) in Fatima, Portugal, were asked by our Lady in an apparition if they would be willing to take on sacrifices and offer them up to God for the conversion of sinners and for the reparation of sins against the Sacred Heart of Jesus and

her Immaculate Heart. After the children were shown heaven, hell and purgatory their hearts were compelled to offer up sacrifices to help Jesus convert souls so they wouldn't go to hell and be separated from God. They engaged in redemptive suffering with the utmost love, urgency and seriousness. As little children they would choose to only eat half their sandwich for lunch (*even though they really wanted to eat the whole sandwich*), they would wear tight ropes around their waist that would hurt them and much more. They offered these sacrifices to the Lord and He received them with joy. Someone may say, if I choose as a sacrifice to not eat the other half of my sandwich for lunch you mean to tell me that it could help another soul? The answer is YES. Let me explain.

When a child picks flowers in a field for their mom or dad and those flowers happen to be yellow dandelions (even though the child does not know they are weeds), how does the parent receive those weeds? The parent receives them joyfully and they see the love by which they are being offered. The mom or dad receives the yellow weeds from the child with such gratitude in their heart because their child thought of them and wanted to offer a gift of love. The parent gently takes those flowers and puts them in a little cup filled with water and places them on the countertop. They also give the child a hug and kiss and thanks them for the beautiful flowers (weeds). Every time the parent walks into the room and sees the flowers there is a warmth that enters their heart. Well, the same with God. If you feel that offering a sacrifice such as not eating half your sandwich, choosing not to watch your favorite TV show or listening to the radio on the way to work is like a weed, nothing of great value, it is of great value to the Lord because he sees it as an offering of Love.

Therefore, whatever physical, emotional or spiritual pains you may experience today, don't waste it. Whatever disappointments come your way today, don't waste it. Any broken hopes or dreams you carry, don't waste that suffering. We are being reminded to tell Jesus, "*Jesus, I offer to you my suffering (or sacrifice) right now and I unite it to your suffering on the cross, your perfect sacrifice to the Father. Perfect my offering Jesus and together WITH you I offer this to the Father for \_\_\_\_\_ and I chose not to feel sorry for myself and to give into frustration and anger.*" You could offer your suffering or sacrifice for a specific person or intention. It could be offered for the soul that is furthest from the Lord, for parents to choose life for their unborn children, for those who are being deceived into thinking assisted suicide and Euthanasia is a good choice." We must always remember that Assisted Suicide and Euthanasia is the ending of a life before its natural time. That soul may need that time to come to salvation through our loving sacrifices.

This month we celebrate two especially important feast days of our Lady, the Assumption and the Queenship of Mary. May our Lady who stood at the foot of her Son's cross, totally united with his suffering through her own, for the salvation of the world, help us to do the same. May she obtain for us the grace of love and perseverance.

Peace and blessings,

Fr. Charles Mangano