

***Twenty-Eighth Week of Ordinary Time***  
***October 13, 2024***  
***Year of the Most Holy Eucharist***  
***Reflection #42***

*“When pain is to be borne, a little courage helps more than much knowledge, a little human sympathy more than much courage, and the least tincture of the love of God more than all.” (C. S. Lewis, The Problem of Pain)*

Choose any moment or any place within the history of mankind, you will find there a person suffering. Suffering is one constant we all must experience during our lives. It knows no age, height or weight limit. It is not thwarted by racial, gender or sexual differences. Suffering links each one present to every other person who has come or will come upon our Earth. This is important since suffering links us to people of the past; it MUST join us to Jesus Christ. With this connection in mind, we must explore how the Eucharist provides meaning to the daily suffering all must endure.

An old joke speaks of death and taxes as the only constants in our lives. The Church would counter by stating this as being half right. Yes, death is the great equalizer every person must face. Yet, there are two other constants we all must face. These would be sin and suffering. Sacred Scripture begins with the Genesis story of creation which introduces the three into the lives of everyone. By this choice of our first parents to disobey God (sin), suffering and death follow as the resulting punishment. Likewise, compassion for those who suffer follows as well. It is this compassion which finds its home in the direct action of God.

Created in the image and likeness of God, mankind has been gifted a rational intellect. Man has used his intellect to both question and solve many of the problems he has encountered. With our intellects, we have sought to rid ourselves of the physical suffering we must experience. The advances in medicine, agriculture and water purification have benefited countless individuals. However, this only affects one half of Man. At one point in our communal history, we began to understand the suffering we endure is not limited to purely physical/material situations. We have been created as one person both body and soul. The suffering we experience which affects our souls can be as painful and destructive as what we endure physically. Thus, leading mankind to seek the meaning of suffering, a reason to continue enduring the pain.

God chooses to provide mankind the answer to the meaning of suffering. He will give us the reason to continue along our lives' roads, no matter how bumpy or washed out they may become. He will do this by facing the Evil which, from The Beginning, has sought to enslave mankind. Over the next few weeks, we will examine God's treatment plan for mankind's ailment of suffering and how we can experience this healing remedy in the Eucharist.