

The Value of Suffering

St. Therese of the Child Jesus



O Lord, You do not like to make us suffer, but You know it is the only way to prepare us to know You as You know Yourself, to prepare us to become like You. You know well that if You sent me but a shadow of earthly happiness, I should cling to it with all the intense ardor of my heart, and so You refuse me even this shadow...because You wish that my heart be wholly Yours.

Life passes so quickly that it is obviously better to have a most splendid crown and a little suffering, than an ordinary crown and no suffering.

When I think that, for a sorrow borne with joy, I shall be able to love You more for all eternity, I understand clearly that if You gave me the entire universe, with all its treasures, it would be nothing in comparison to the slightest suffering. Each new suffering, each pang of the heart, is a gentle wind to bear to You, O Jesus, the perfume of the soul that loves You; then You smile lovingly, and immediately make ready a new grief, and fill the cup to the brim, thinking the more the soul grows in love, the more it must grow in suffering too.

What a favor, my Jesus, and how You must love me to send me suffering! Eternity itself will not be long enough to bless You for it. Why this predilection? It is a secret which You will reveal to me in our heavenly home on the day when You will wipe away all our tears.

Lord, You ask me for this suffering, this sorrow...You need it for souls, for my soul. O Jesus, since You have made me understand that You would give me souls through the Cross, the more crosses I meet, the more ardent my thirst for suffering becomes.

I am happy not to be free from suffering here; suffering united with love is the only thing that seems desirable to me in this vale of tears.