

CONFERENCES FROM THE DAYS OF PRAYER

For three years, “Le Royaume” presented excerpts from homilies delivered by the priests in the Work. From now on, the homilies will be replaced by some of their conferences given after Mass during the days of prayer at Spiri-Maria.

Accepting the Cross Out of Love



by **Father Luc
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“There is no greater love than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.” (Jn 15:13)

This sentence from Jesus’ farewell discourse in the Gospel according to Saint John applies perfectly to His Passion and death on the cross. It shows us that the path to genuine love passes through that of suffering. And, one day or another, suffering will come knocking at the door of every person.

This can be a physical suffering (such as a headache), a psychic suffering (like fighting against thoughts of envy or jealousy) or a spiritual suffering (such as during phases of aridity when we have the impression that God has disappeared whereas, in reality, the closeness of His light blinds us). There are also the different nights of the soul which God permits in order to help us achieve the fulness of Love.

However, the secret to live well the times of suffering or tribulation is to abandon oneself to God’s will. Jesus said to His disciples: “Doing the will of him who sent me and bringing his work to completion is my food.” (Jn 4:34)

It was His Love which helped Jesus go to the very end, as He indicated to Maria Valtorta in *L’Évangile tel qu’il m’a été révélé*, when He said: “In the inhumane tortures, in order not to cry out in my pain as a Man, and not to despair of God and say that He was too harsh and unjust towards His Victim, I repeated your names to myself, I saw you. From that moment, I blessed you.” (*L’Évangile tel qu’il m’a été révélé*, vol. 9, p. 19 – text not in the English edition of *The Poem of the Man-God*.)

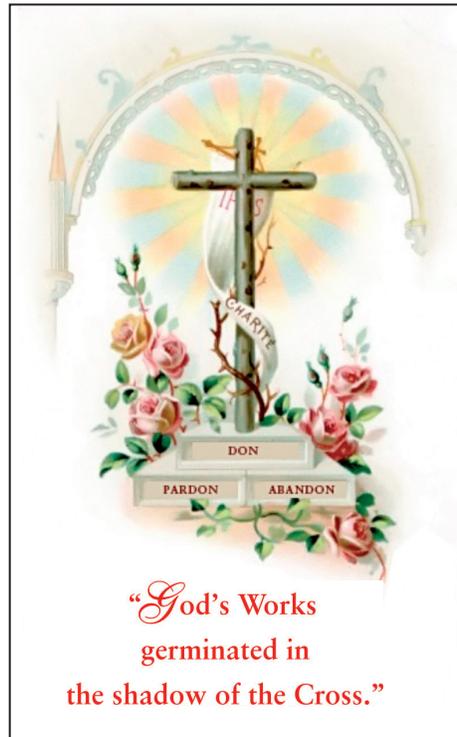
The love of God and charity towards others help us to look at suffering with a supernatural eye. They help us see the hand of God in His interventions which are the tribulations He permits for our sanctification.

Next to the thorns, there are always some roses, that is to say, the graces

paid for by our sufferings lived as Christians should. The secret to living suffering well is then found in a loving acceptance of this suffering, in the offering we make of it, in our way of looking at it supernaturally and in our surrender to the Father’s will.

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Such was the life of our foundress. And she often exhorted us to accept suf-



fering with love and in a spirit of faith, in abandonment to the divine will, for it is through suffering that God comes to progressively strip us of our self in order to draw us to Him.

Our Mother often spoke of the power concealed in the cross accepted with love. One day, she said: “Let us accept the Cross presented to us. Our ‘Fiat!’ is an elevator that lifts the soul to new heights, and our heaven having been made clearer, we are open to the purest of love.

This is living Heaven on earth. Then, we can no longer ask God to free us from this or that suffering, but we say to Him instead, every morning as we arise: ‘I want all you want. Your will, Lord, is my will.’” (*Le Royaume*, no. 179, May-June 2006, p. 9)

We must also remember that suffering is different for each person and that it corresponds to his or her innermost desire. That is the reminder our Mother gave us when she wrote: “I realize that in life nothing is the result of chance and that all is the working of grace. The trials and tribulations that God sends us correspond to the secret desire of each soul concerning the place it wishes to have in Heaven. The closer to God we desire to be, the higher the price we must pay. Trials are not punishments; on the contrary, they are the surest and quickest means of reaching God, our great Love.” (*Life of Love II*, p. 319)

Thus, the cross assumed with love has the task of divesting us of self in order to reach the haven of peace. Our Mother told us: “The more God exacts renunciation of and the more He tries the servant who accepts with love to be thus ground down, reduced to a state of impotence, even in his faculties and especially in his will, the more does God take possession of that being in order to realize through it His designs of love.” (*Vie d’Amour*, Appendix IV, p. 156)

“There is no greater love than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.” (Jn 15:13) Love is the secret to our ascent to God since He gives us the strength and the generosity to accept suffering in a spirit of faith and in abandonment to His will. May prayer and our Mother’s *Life of Love* draw us always more and more to the summits of Love! ■