

SUFFERING INTO SALVATION
Conference 2

Opening Prayer:

Jesus: *I LIVE...*
may it not be I who live; but rather –
You who live in me.
As you lived in Mary taking on flesh and blood
so ***live also in me taking on flesh and blood in me...***
Think in me, pray in me, love in me, **SUFFER IN ME**;
Look with my eyes, speak with my tongue, touch with my hands;
Forgive through me, **heal through me**, teach through me,
encourage through me, help through me, strengthen through me...
Walk with my feet over the earth and in the power of the Holy Spirit:
Lead all to the Father so that God may be all in all. Amen

Tobit means "God is Good" – it's also the title of one of the books in the Old Testament. In a very real way, the title itself is ironic in that Tobit, LIKE JOB, was a just man who experienced great periods of suffering in life for no apparent reason. His story serves as another example in the Scriptures which speak of suffering without cause or understanding.

I would like share with you a reading from the book of Tobit:

“Tobit started toward the door, and stumbled. But his son ran to him and ‘**took hold of his father**’, and he sprinkled the gall upon his father's eyes, saying; "**Courage father.**" And when his eyes began to smart he rubbed them, and the white films scaled off from the corners of his eyes. Then he saw his son and embraced him, and he wept and said, "Blessed are you, O God, and blessed is your name for ever, and blessed are all your Holy Angels. For you have afflicted me, but you have had mercy upon me; for **HERE I SEE MY SON TOBIAS!**" And his son went in rejoicing, and he reported to his father the great things that had happened to him in Media” (Tobit 11:10-15).

On October 13, 2003 – I was in the seminary in Mount Angel, Oregon. That night, I got a call from my dad informing me that he just been diagnosed with cancer of the liver. After **PRAYING, contemplating and THINKING** things over for a couple days, I met with Rector of the seminary and shared with him my desire to be with my family so as to live through this experience with them. I made it home a couple of days later **not knowing what to expect...**

I'll for ever remember walking through the front door that evening... As usual, my mom rushed towards me and welcomed me home with a kiss and a hug. Meanwhile, my father slowly emerged out of the living room. Without saying a word, he walked towards me holding his right side. There was an awkwardness in the air that no one could escape from. And so, in an attempt to ease the moment, I said; “**Hey Dad, how are you doing?**” He responded, “**My son...**” he wrapped his arms around me and gave me a hug like had never given me before. As the seconds went by, he began to clench me next to him harder and harder. **Well over twenty seconds elapsed into eternity amidst sheer silence**, as my mother stood beside us enveloped in the SACREDNESS OF THE MOMENT.

My dad died **six weeks following that hug...**

In a very real sense, the experience of Tobias bringing **healing, courage, strength** and **support** to his father and family in the passage of Scripture that we heard a few minutes ago was the exact experience that I found myself being immersed in from all sides. Thing is, before I walked through that door – bringing **healing, courage, strength** and **support** to my father and indeed, the rest of my family – was not ‘part of my plan’ – it's just what happened given the circumstances.

I share this experience with all of you because while it might not be every day that you encounter tragedy and suffering within the context of your own immediate families, the reality of Pastoral Care is such that – in the work that we do, we encounter many intimate moments with people where words need not be spoken: where seconds are transformed into eternal time frames that will never depart from our memory... where bringing **healing, courage, strength and support** to someone happens in ways **unbeknownst to us, DESPITE OF US**, and yet **IT HAPPENS THROUGH US!!**

All of that to say that if we were going to actually help people **pray their way through suffering**, pray their way into Eternal Salvation, then **WE BETTER BE IN TUNE WITH THIS UNSPOKEN DYNAMIC**. For in the work that we do, countless opportunities will inevitably present themselves before us when we, God willing, will encounter people who are afraid unsure of their situation, grasping for reality. It's in the midst of such an encounter that the human heart is most open to the Divine.

We as Pastoral Care workers are simply there to guide and enable our suffering brothers and sisters towards encountering the ONE AND ONLY TRUE SOURCE OF ALL **healing, courage, strength and support: the CRUCIFIED AND RISEN LORD...**

For just as in the Scripture passage we heard Tobit say out loud: “**Courage father**”, so we are called to do the same in Pastoral Care. For just as my primary ‘*raison d’être*’ over the course of the following six weeks was to simply be there for my family; be there to listen, be there to be present. Such is the heart of what we do.

For in as much as I yearned to say the right words for my dad to find peace, acceptance, and total surrender of heart to soon mount the approaching PALE HORSE OF DEATH – it was not for me or for anyone else to provide that for him.

There is only one who “...*searches out the abyss, and the hearts of men, for the Most High knows all that may be known. No thought escapes him, and not one word is hidden from him*” (Sirach 42:18-20).

All of what this means is that even though we are the ones who encounter people and are expected to bring them **hope, faith, and courage, 90% of the time** it will be they in their sufferings that will minister to us by their witness... **90% of the time**, we are the ones who will walk away from an encounter with a suffering brother or sister with an increase in *our HOPE*, in *our FAITH*, and in *our TRUST in God*.

That's why the following thought I'm now going to share with you, which is a translation from a French Spiritual Writer - by the name of *Jean-Pierre de Cossade*, is a message for all of us – and not just a thought to be presented to those whom we minister to...

He writes:

"We must *offer ourselves to God like a clean, smooth canvas* and not worry ourselves with what God may choose to paint on it. We need to have a perfect trust in him and abandon ourselves along with all of our needs to his creative hands.

It is the same for a lump of stone...

Each **thunderous blow** of the hammering of the sculptors chisel makes it *feel as though it were being destroyed*. As blow after blow descends, the stone knows nothing on how the sculptor is shaping it: all it feels is the chisel chipping away at it, changing it, **mutilating it** – [*for example, let's take a piece of stone destined to become a beautiful statue: while it is being chiseled away, we might ask of it:*]

“What do you think is happening to you? *Why do you think you suffer at this time?*”

If it could, perhaps the stone might answer: ‘Don't ask me - all I know is that **I must stay immovable** in the hands of the sculptor. I MUST TRUST THE SCULPTOR. **I must love him** and endure all that he inflicts upon me to produce the beautiful figure he has in mind.

For **what I do know** is that *His work is the best possible!* It is perfect and I welcome each blow of the chisel as the best thing that could happen to me – although, **if I am to be truthful** – I feel that every one of these blows is *disfiguring me, ruining me, destroying me...*”

*What we need to learn is to **BECOME STONES IN THE HANDS OF THE SCULPTOR...***

For **God continually holds in his paternal hand** THE CHISEL OF MORTIFICATION with which He cuts into the quick of our affections. He cuts off those links, those friends, that health, or reputation, which draws us away from discovering Him.

In the FIRES OF PAIN, he absorbs the **attachments**, the **secret** and **invisible links** that draw us into the love of perishable, earthly things. He melts them down so that our souls can once again become spiritualized. Can become that well-prepared canvas, on which the rays of Divine Goodness will one day succeed in leaving their imprint.

For the goal of all human **Trials and Tribulations** is that whatever is mortal within us – **THROUGH SUFFERING** – will some day end up being absorbed by immortality.

I'm sure that everyone here is familiar with St. Padre Pio – that humble Franciscan Friar who bore upon his body the 5 wounds of the crucified Christ for 50 years of his life. While that in itself is pretty special, another exciting fact about today's St. is that unlike so many other Saints in the church calendar, Padre Pio passed away in 1968.

What this means is that his voice, **his words of Absolution**, his celebration of the daily Mass which **TOOK UP TO THREE HOURS** due to his being enraptured in ecstasy, these things are still very much alive in people's memories throughout the globe.

So here's what a *modern-day Saint* had to say concerning suffering and its purpose:

“Suffering is a grace ordained by God so as to exult your soul to the PERFECT UNION OF LOVE. Before a Christian attains union, he or she needs to be **purged of his defects** as well as of all of his earthly attachments—things both *natural* and *supernatural*.

This is necessary because every natural inclination and mode of behavior must be surrendered to God so as to be transformed to work in another way, a more divine than human way...

THROUGH SUFFERING: God purges the soul by totally emptying it of itself. All self-centeredness must be replaced by a **new way of thinking and wishing** that is simply and purely supernatural and celestial.

In order to arrive at this state, the Christian must be subjected to this **painful trial** whereby he is purged by an intense light that reveals faults otherwise unseen. He sees God not as a loving Father, but as a terrifying Judge. He feels as if God were casting him out; he feels **hopelessly lost...**

And yet, it is through this time that **God unites the soul to himself with chains of love**. This light of understanding reveals to the soul its own nothingness, its sins, its defects, and its wretchedness. The light eradicates every bit of esteem and conceit and complacency, down to the very roots of the soul. In this way, the will of the inner man becomes ready for the joy of Mystical Union. Moreover, this **LIGHT** shows the soul its **ABSOLUTE DEPENDENCY UPON GOD** for its salvation and its inability to do anything to save itself.

So as to support this profound observation on the experience of human suffering along with its purpose: here is what God the Father communicated to St. Catherine of Siena in her work entitled "**THE DIALOGUE**". Here we find the thoughts of **GOD THE FATHER** himself concerning the reason for the existence of suffering and its ultimate purpose:

Our Heavenly Father puts it this way:

"Created things are less than the human person. (*In other words, all these things around us are less important than the human person*) Things were made for you, **not you for them**, and so they can never satisfy you.

ONLY I CAN SATISFY YOU... Do you want me to tell you why people suffer?

You know that **love always brings suffering** **IF** what a person has identified with is lost!!

These souls in one way or another have *identified with the Earth in their love*, and so they have in fact become Earth themselves. Some have **identified with their wealth**, some with **their status**, some with **their children**. They suffer unbearable pain in their lives because the world cannot satisfy them. And so, not being satisfied: they suffer..."

What our **Heavenly Father** is saying here is that so long as our hearts are possessed by thoughts of this world, from: *plans that we have, vacations we long to take, things we want to own, health we desire* – so long as these things live in our thoughts and in our hearts, **then we will suffer** because in the end, we will lose all of them... we will lose that which we love – and to lose what you love is what it means to suffer...

BUT if our hearts are set on God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, if our thoughts and our hearts are continually bent on the things of Heaven – then we will never suffer *in the **Truest Sense of the word*** because it is impossible for us to lose that which we have fallen in love with.

It is IMPOSSIBLE to lose God...

Therefore, to '*Suffer Our Way Into Salvation*' means to set before the eyes of our souls on the landscape of heaven, the Gates of Paradise, the eternal wedding banquet of the lamb: the place where we will be reunited with all of our loved ones, the Angels and the Saints for all of eternity...

Our late Holy Father, John Paul II, in his encyclical entitled "**EVANGELIUM VITAE**, (*the Gospel of life*), wrote a beautiful reflection concerning this reality:

"Man alone, among all visible creatures, is *"capable of knowing and loving his Creator"*. The life which God bestows upon man is much more than mere existence in time. It is a drive towards fullness of life; it is the seed of an existence which transcends the very limits of time: "**For God created man for incorruption, and made him in the image of his own eternity**" (Wis 2:23).

SADLY, very little effort is spent thinking about heaven these days. While people might give a nod to the idea every once in a while – *when forced to attend a funeral because it's the right thing to do* – we are not so fixed on the afterlife, on obtaining paradise in such a degree that we are willing to alter our goals and aspirations in life. To *alter what we live for* – and what we die for... *to alter everything* from our **thoughts, intentions, words and actions**.

It seems as though few are willing to change in order to enter the **New Jerusalem...**

THANKS BE TO GOD FOR THE EXPERIENCE OF HUMAN SUFFERING!!! For often times it serves as the only thorn in our sides, a thorn that reminds us each and every day how *this earthly life is passing* and that the day is quickly approaching when we will have to render an account of ourselves to Almighty God.

For us the book of Hebrews chapter 13 reminds us:

"Here we have no lasting city, but we seek the one that is to come" (Hebrews 13:14)

Holding the WEALTH of such a thought in mind – about 2 weeks ago, I spent some time with a husband and wife who live as ranch owners just on the outside of the city limits. From the outside, looking at their lives while passing by the highway: (**beautiful farmland, this view of the wide-open sky with the mountains in the background, a quiet home in the countryside...**) seeing all these things while driving by – one would **AUTOMATICALLY ASSUME**: aren't those people blessed! Living out in the country like that!! Enjoying each and every day fresh air in the midst of God's country."

Well as conversations usually tend to go, they shared with me how they had three children. Two boys that are about my age and **one daughter...** *One daughter* whom they lost seven years ago due to an over-prescription of painkillers by a medical doctor. *One daughter* whose passing from this life to the next forever altered the dynamics of a once peaceful family life.

Seeing as the husband and wife continue going to church – continue believing in the existence of a compassionate God – I just came right out and asked the mother: "**How did you keep your Faith so strong?**"

Without blinking an eye, without even a moment's thought, with a strong voice filled with conviction she replied: "Because I want to see my daughter again... **The Catholic Church offers ETERNAL LIFE** – and I need to know that I will see her again and be with her: **that's why I believe...**"

HOW DO YOU LIKE THAT ANSWER!! Now there's a woman who every day, and I mean at some point during every hour of every day **she thinks about the existence of Eternal Life...** WHY??

Because she has identified her sufferings (*and her sufferings being the worst kind that can possibly exist: the sufferings poured out over the soul of a parent who has to live through burying a child*) she identified those sufferings with God's promise of a better time to come – with God's promise of eternal life for those who believe in his Son Jesus Christ.

Maybe some of you are thinking within yourselves, "WELL THAT'S JUST way TOO INTENSE of a SUFFERING – I mean, God doesn't want us to think about **HEAVEN** so much – and all the time!! After all, not only as an unnatural for most parents to lose a child in this life, but it also occurs very rarely."

YES, this is true, it is rare and an unnatural event for a parent to have to bury a child... **yes,** it is an experience of very intense suffering... it's the kind of suffering that will **lead you into the heart of God** or *will lead you into rejecting God.*

And that is why I would like to be so bold as to say: "God the Father desires for us to keep the death of his Son on the cross in front of our eyes daily **just like that woman thinks about her daughter daily...**"

Why? Because Mary, the Mother of God, not only buried her Son – but she stood there at the foot of the cross and watched him die a horrible death... Mary always has been and will forever BE that "**perfect disciple**", the first Church, she who was conceived without original sin and therefore not liable to the punishment due to sin. Namely: suffering and death... and yet, Mary, in witnessing the death of her only Son, **suffered to the point of death.**

Do we ever stop to think **how sorrowful her heart** was as she stood at the foot of the cross watching her only son die... It is here that we see the Mother of the Redeemed experiencing a sorrow that is beyond words – a sorrow that **those of you in this room who have ever had to tell parents that their child has died** know what that sorrow is all about.

Mary, that perfect disciple, is the template for the rest of us "**would be believers**". Just as she mourned intensely the death of her Son, to follow her example calls for us to mourn our Lord's death as though he had been our only child... So that through this kind of **intense, piercing, all-consuming suffering** we also might be led into the HEART OF GOD... led into contemplating eternal life!!!

It's in this way, each and every day Christians have the opportunity to **SUFFER THROUGH PRAYER...**

It's in this way, each and every day Christians have the opportunity to **SUFFER INTO SALVATION...**

And you know what the best part of all this is?? It's that **this isn't Fr. Jerome's idea!** For you see in the Scriptures there exists an Oracle that was composed by the prophet Zechariah some 500 years before the coming of the Messiah:

"I will pour out a SPIRIT OF COMPASSION AND SUPPLICATION, **when they LOOK ON HIM whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child,** and weep bitterly over him, **as one weeps over a first-born.**" (Zechariah 12:10)

POWERFUL... let that soak in for a few seconds...

After all, that is exactly why all throughout the Gospels, Jesus speaks of the necessity for a **TOTAL COMMITMENT from his disciples** – He's inviting us /urging us to sit down and take stock of our lives in light of suffering. Do we have the stamina to go the distance as **True Followers of the Lord??**

The message from Jesus is loud and clear:

“Whoever **does not** carry their cross and follow me cannot be my disciple....”

While it's true that many people can easily name the cross that they must carry due to sufferings in their lives, some people in life seem to never experienced hardship or suffering. What God is making clear to us today is that everyone, I mean *everyone is called into suffering* because in light of what we have just talked about concerning God's desire for us to “*mourn the death of his son as though he were our only child: as though he was your own flesh and blood...*” the cross that we are being invited to carry is the one upon which Jesus finds himself crucified!!

For when we carry **HIS CROSS in our hearts** – mourning his death as though it were our only child – then we suffer. And when we suffer through the cross – THE ONLY CROSS that brings us salvation – than our suffering is never done in vain... rather, it will be a *sobering, redemptive, and glorifying suffering* because it will draw our inner thoughts towards the **contemplation of the RESURRECTION** which in the end, draws us into the **contemplation of HEAVEN**.

And when that happens – then we find ourselves **PRAYING AND SUFFERING OUR WAY INTO SALVATION...**

Like A preacher once exclaimed: "**In every person's life there is a throne**. When *self is on that throne*, *Christ is on the cross*. But when *Christ is on that throne*, *self is on the cross*."

Every day, we carry a cross, HIS CROSS: who we put on the cross is our choice...

And while were on a roll here, I want to take this one step further when it comes to understanding the proper place of suffering in our lives: now, everyone here is familiar with St. Paul's description concerning how we are to view ourselves in light of our relationship with Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is alluded to in St. Paul's writings as being the head while we are his body.

In his letter to the Ephesians chapter 4 verse 14, St. Paul reminds us how “**THROUGH HIM the whole body grows, and with the proper functioning of the members joined firmly together by each supporting ligament, builds itself up in love**". (Ephesians 4:14-16)

The reason why it's worth pondering this image at this time is because it will *help us make sense of suffering all* the more. For you see, all of the baptize throughout the world make up the mystical and collective body of Jesus Christ, WHICH IS THE CHURCH... and the Church, the Mystical Body of the risen Lord *exists because it is modeled upon his own individual body!!!*

In other words, what was accomplished in Jesus Christ as an individual – MUST BE CONTINUED in his collective, Mystical Body for such is the law of **INDESTRUCTIBLE SOLIDARITY** that was established between the head and its members.

The point that is being made here is that it would make no sense whatsoever that the head of the body (**Christ**) should have had to pass through the **transformation of excruciating suffering** before into the **GLORY OF ETERNAL LIFE** while the rest of the body (namely we) enjoy a comfortably pampered ride into the **GLORY OF ETERNAL LIFE!**

St. Bernard explains it best when he says: "*It would be a very strange contrast if the head crowned with thorns were joined to an exquisite limb, or flesh scourged with lashes to a flesh reared in luxury and softness.*"

What that means for us is that in order to deserve to be glorified with him one day, it is imperative that on this Earth we should suffer with him. St. Paul was fully aware of this when he wrote

"In my own flesh, I make up what is lacking in the sufferings of Christ for the sake of his body, the Church." (Colossians 1:24) TRANSITION POINT

Alright now: with all this talk on suffering, accepting suffering, transforming suffering, I want to point out ... another dimension of God's mercy and compassion at work in our world which manifests itself through the way that God reaches out "everyday" from the heavens above in order to alleviate our sufferings in this life...

There is a hospital in New York City that's named "**Calvary Hospital**". It is both unique and strange at the same time in that it will *only admit patients who are terminally ill*. That is, you must have less than three months to live before you are admitted into the hospital.

They use an *integrated approach* to medicine over there which means they use: **Psychotherapy, Counseling, and Spiritual Support** on top of **regular hospital care**. And yet, some say that the most important ingredient of all is the fact that everyone actually cares about one another. For you see, from doctors to nurses to patients, everyone is on a first-name basis. As a matter of fact, Doctors and nurses are carefully selected for this hospital and are expected to not only get involved with their patients – **but to REALLY CARE ABOUT THEM!**

They have some very interesting statistics:

50 percent of the patients *double their anticipated life span*.

15 percent are discharged... (and remember, these were people who supposedly had less than three months to live)

There's one secret to this hospital's success: "**Calvary's secret is love...**" from years of experience, statistics from this hospital show how **most people** will keep on struggling against the fiercest of odds **if they know** that someone out there actually cares for them: that someone **REALLY LOVES THEM...**

Well Jesus did suffer on the cross for us, he also made it clear throughout his three years of public ministry that he is **in the healing business** – and he's in the healing business because He cares, **because He really loves** each and every one of us!! That's why when the gospel writers penned the life of Jesus to paper, we read over and over again how the son of God went about healing all kinds of people from all walks of life who had any kind of sickness or disease – *even those who were possessed by demons (which is a sickness of the soul)* – **even these people** were brought to him so that he could lay his hands on them and cure them!!!

Jesus was **in the healing business** when he walked the Earth and as our resurrected Lord, He **continues to be in the healing business!** And he does so in our day and age through the use of three different types of channels:

I. Our Lord Heals through Regular Medical Channels

Given that all of you work at the ROCKYVIEW HOSPITAL, I'd say you are more than familiar with this channel of healing. It finds its origins at the beginning of creation God commanded that human beings have dominion over this world. In the last few centuries, through the progress of science and medicine we have been taking dominion over more and more diseases. For example, researchers tell us that *many kinds of leukemia have virtually been conquered*.

While it is true that medical healing comes through the skills and procedures of the medical community. Those discoveries, which **are a direct result of using the gift of our intelligence**, and given that we have been made in the image and likeness of God, our intelligence is but a reflection of the intelligence of our Creator. As such, any and all advancements seen in the medical world is purely: "GIFT FROM GOD..." a gift that is meant to **temporarily ease human suffering!**

II. Our Lord Heals through Miracles

The second way our Lord continues to heal is through miracles. Yes, miracles – like the ones he worked when he was here on Earth – miracles of healing, though they may be rare: nonetheless still happen.

It's reported that less **than 1 percent** of the seekers who go to the healing shrine at Lourdes, in France, **are healed**. Yet, doctors and scientists attest to those cases of healing. Miracles happen – we must believe in their existence through faith: in other words, we must *never hesitate to ask for one...*

III. God Heals on the Way to Heaven

The third way God heals is '*on our way to heaven...*' At the end of the day, **all healing** – from the miraculous cures of someone in a stage IV cancer to the raising of Lazarus from the dead – all miracles in the end are but temporary remedies **because the MORTALITY RATE OF HUMAN BEINGS IS STILL 100 PERCENT!**

While it is a good thing to think positively – **to have Faith and Hope in the existence of a pain-free life in the midst of physical or spiritual anguish and suffering**, at the same time, we need to be honest with ourselves by way of remembering that just as *there is a time to be born, there is also a time to suffer, a time to surrender, and eventually a time to die...* and rather than being upset about all this, if there's one thing that I hope you walk away with from today's talks it's that no matter what we are going through: **we must remain focused on the HOPE of the time that will come after we die**: the time when we leave the shell of our mortality behind while we **cross over** into the **FREEDOM OF ETERNAL LIFE...**

Why do we have to think about these things?? Because whenever we are thinking about eternal life, then we are experiencing God's third way of healing and alleviating suffering: "**Healing on the way to Heaven...**"

Now WHILE I have already alluded many times as to the reasons why our Lord's death upon the cross is the sign of salvation upon which we must look towards in order to experience healing:

It must also be stated that Jesus himself made sure, on the night before he died, that we would **keep our noses in his death** until His return upon the clouds surrounded by the Angels in all their glory and power.

For you see, on the night before he died, Jesus instituted the Last Supper and commanded us to take part of it in memory of him. And so it has come to pass for the last 2000 years, every time a worshiping assembly gathers in order to celebrate the Mass, every time we partake of our Lord's Last Supper, **not only do our noses end up in the experience of His death** – but Jesus went even goes so far as to feed us with his own RESURRECTED Flesh and Blood.

WHY?

Because our Lord reminds us in John 6 verse 53: "**TRULY, TRULY I SAY TO YOU**: unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you; **HE WHO EATS MY FLESH AND DRINKS MY BLOOD HAS ETERNAL LIFE...**" (John 6:53)

It's called the EUCHARIST... the Eucharist is the time when we are **fed with our Lord's flesh and blood...** Have you ever noticed how during the time of consecration: the bread is always, always consecrated apart from the wine?? They are consecrated one following the other because this signifies a separation between the two. And whenever you separate flesh from blood, you end up with one result: **DEATH...**

To this day, our Lord's body hanging from the cross remains the only **Healing Expression of God's love for us** at work in this world. Our Lord crucified on Mount Calvary is the one and only "SPIRITUAL HOSPITAL" of every man woman and child – **for at the end of the day: WERE ALL TERMINAL.**

Where's the HOPE in all this? Our hope is found in the fact that it's through his sufferings, through his death: that WE ARE HEALED – *yes, most of us will be healed in this life many times over before we meet our end* – but that's only temporary!!

Meanwhile, the Greatest Healing that happens at every Mass is **the healing of our wounded souls** because every time we receive the flesh and drink the blood of God, who is truly present in the Eucharist, then our souls find themselves being **BATHED IN THE HEALING LIGHT OF GOD'S SPIRIT...**

JESUS IS THE DIVINE PHYSICIAN who not only exercises *physical healing* powers over the mortal bodies of men and women, but more importantly: he exercises *spiritual healing* upon the soul of every man woman and child that has ever or will ever present themselves before him in prayer and most specifically: in the reception of the Eucharist!!

Therefore, in your own "Sacred Journey" remember to welcome the *Divine Physician* within the depths of your own souls through **PRAYER** and the reception of the **SACRAMENTS...**

And at the end of the day, regardless of the sufferings that come our way, always remember that human life from the moment of conception, to its natural end is still a beautiful gift to be *Treasured, Valued and Honored* above ALL THINGS...

For as the prophet Jeremiah reminds us: *God has a plan* for each human being He has ever and will ever breathe forth from the TREASURY OF CREATION:

I leave you with the promise made by our God to each and everyone of us: HIS SUFFERING PEOPLE:

“I will visit you, and I WILL FULFILL TO YOU MY PROMISE and *bring you back to THIS PLACE*. For I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.

Then you will **call upon me and come and pray to me**, and I will hear you. You will seek me and find me; when you *seek me with all your heart*, I will be found by you, says the LORD, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, says the LORD, and **I will bring you back to the place *from which I sent you into exile.***” (Jeremiah 29:10-14)