



# Saint Josemaria Escriva

Founder of Opus Dei

[Home](#) - [Saint Josemaria](#) - [Talking to God](#) - The meaning of suffering

## The meaning of suffering

2009.3.5

I will tell you which are man's treasures on earth so that you will appreciate them: hunger, thirst, heat, cold, pain, dishonour, poverty, loneliness, betrayal, slander, prison...

*The Way, 194*

### One definitive answer

Faced with the weight of all this, a Christian can find only one genuine answer, a definitive answer: Christ on the cross, a God who suffers and dies, a God who gives us his heart opened by a lance for the love of us all. Our Lord abominates injustice and condemns those who commit it. But he respects the freedom of each individual. He permits injustice to happen because, as a result of original sin, it is part and parcel of the human condition. Yet his heart is full of love for men. Our suffering, our sadness, our anguish, our hunger and thirst for justice

*Christ is Passing By, 168*

### Difficulties give us a share in Jesus' life

The remedy is to look at Christ, if when faced with suffering, you at some time feel that your soul is wavering. The scene of Calvary proclaims to everyone that afflictions have to be sanctified, that we are to live united to the cross.

If we bear our difficulties as Christians, they are turned into reparation and atonement. They give us a share in Jesus' destiny and in his life. Out of love for men he volunteered to experience the whole gamut of pain and torment. He was born, lived and died poor. He was attacked, insulted, defamed, slandered and unjustly condemned. He knew treachery and abandonment by his disciples. He experienced isolation and the bitterness of punishment and death. And now the same Christ is suffering in his members, in all of humanity spread throughout the earth, whose head and firstborn and redeemer he is.

*Christ is Passing By, 168*

### A course in suffering

A whole programme for a good course in the 'subject' of suffering is given to us by

the Apostle: *spe gaudentes* — rejoicing in hope, *In tribulatione patientes* — patient in troubles, *orationi instantes* — persevering in prayer.

*The Way, 209*

Join your suffering, your Cross that comes from within or without, to the Will of God, by saying a generous *Fiat* – Be it done! And you will be filled with joy and with peace.

*The Forge, 771*

Let us bless pain. Love pain. Sanctify pain... Glorify pain!

*The Way, 208*

### **Suffering and cheerfulness**

If we join our own little things, those insignificant or big difficulties of ours, to the great sufferings of Our Lord, the Victim (He is the only Victim!), their value will increase. They will become a treasure, and then we will take up the Cross of Christ gladly and with style. And then every suffering will soon be overcome: nobody, nothing at all, will be able to take away our peace and our cheerfulness.

*The Forge, 785*

### **Your neighbour's afflictions**

Do not pass by a neighbour's affliction with indifference. That person — a relative, a friend, a colleague, someone you don't know — is your brother.

Remember the Gospel story you have heard so often with sadness: not even the relatives of Jesus trusted Him. — Make sure the scene is not repeated.

*Furrow, 251*

### **With Mary's help**

Marvel at Mary's courage: at the foot of the Cross, with the greatest of human sorrows — there is no sorrow like her sorrow — filled with fortitude.

And ask her for that same strength, so that you too can remain beside the Cross. You are not alone. Neither you nor I can ever find ourselves alone. And even less if we go to Jesus through Mary, for she is a Mother who will never abandon us.

*The Forge, 249*