

The Church's teaching on Redemptive Suffering - "By his passion and death on the cross Christ has given a new meaning to suffering: it can henceforth configure us to him and unite us with his redemptive passion." -CCC 1505

I, Paul, became a servant of this gospel. I am now rejoicing in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am completing what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church. I became its servant according to God's commission that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known. -Colossians 1:23-25

Misconception 1: "Because I can offer my sickness and pain up as an intercession for others, then God must want me to be sick and in pain."

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly. -John 10:10

Misconception 2: "What about the stigmata? Isn't that proof that God sometimes does not want to heal?"

Misconception 3: "Jesus requires my sickness and infirmity offered up so that others can be healed or saved."

Suffering united to Christ doesn't change God - it changes you!

And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us. -Romans 5:3-5

Misconception 4: “St. Paul not being healed of His thorn in the flesh is proof that God does choose some to have sickness or infirmity.”

"Do you see how he has now revealed it in the clearest manner? For in mentioning the species of the infirmity he spoke not of fevers, nor any return of that sort, nor any other bodily ailment, but of injuries, persecutions, distresses." - *John Chrysostom, Homily on 2 Corinthians*

Discouragement: Not everyone you pray for will be healed.

When John heard in prison of the works of the Messiah, he sent his disciples to him with this question, “Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?” Jesus said to them in reply, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them. And blessed is the one who takes no offense at me.” -*Matthew 11:2-6*

What can we learn from John the Baptist?

When they came to the crowd a man approached, knelt down before him, and said, “Lord, have pity on my son, for he is a lunatic and suffers severely; often he falls into fire, and often into water. I brought him to your disciples, but they could not cure him.” Jesus said in reply, “O faithless and perverse generation, how long will I be with you? How long will I endure you? Bring him here to me.” Jesus rebuked him and the demon came out of him, and from that hour the boy was cured. Then the disciples approached Jesus in private and said, “Why could we not drive it out?” He said to them, “Because of your little faith. Amen, I say to you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.” [These only come out through prayer and fasting.] -*Matthew 17: 15-21*

What can we learn from the father’s disappointment?

What can we learn from the disciples' disappointment?