



FIAT-Newsletter Nr 72 – March 2020

"Here I stand at the door and knock" (Ap 3:20)

(the mystery of suffering)

L.J. Cardinal Suenens

The seed of life season

Nobody is spared suffering. It follows our every step, from the cradle to the grave, like our shadow following us on the road. We find it difficult to understand what is aptly termed the mystery of suffering. We would like to have a world with constant sun and no shadow. If it depended on us, we would choose a world with two seasons only: spring and summer, and no winter. And yet, those so-called "dead" season contains the seed of life

Consider winter in our forests: the apparently lifeless trees are getting ready for the sap to rise again; the dead branches that are cut off will make it possible for new ones to grow. Winter is not death, but the germination of new life. Winter is a compost heap, providing nourishment for the foliage to follow. Winter is not utter desolation, it is expectation.

When someone is very ill, we take their hand in a gesture of sympathy, to indicate that we are with them, that we understand their suffering, that we are sharing it. At that moment, words of compassion seem so superficial. Suffering is so personal, so incommunicable.



"Even today, Jesus is born of Mary and the Holy Spirit".

+ L.J. Cardinal Suenens

God, is He sending me little discomforts?

I have rarely read anything on suffering that shows greater understanding than the following passage written by the late King Baudouin to Veronica O'Brien, his spiritual guide:

"I still have so much progress to make when a small cross comes my way. Each time I allow myself to be caught unawares and do not recognise it, do not accept it, do not embrace it as I would if Jesus himself were coming to meet.

How I would love to be able to welcome him with joy and affection! And to stop making a fuss whenever I feel indisposed. There is no denying that I am still a long way from the grace of 'Abandonment to Divine Providence'. But I believe that my Father desires to give it to me, otherwise He would not bestow on me these little discomforts that even the best doctors cannot explain.

Another area in which I have everything still to learn is not to take offence when I do not meet with gratitude. In all these areas you have been a real example to me ever since we have known you. In Ea".

Unite with the Love of God

And here is Veronica's reply:

"I wish you a happy, very happy Lent, and a fidelity that is ever more sensitive, more delicate, more attentive to all that the Holy Spirit will ask of you.

What a purifying sacrament suffering must be, for the Lord to reserve it, like a unique favour, for his Mother and all those whom he loves with a special predilection.

It must be the Love of God pressing in upon us, a bit like Jesus saying 'ecco sto ad ostium et pulso' – 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock' – something for which we shall thank God for all eternity with tears in our eyes, if tears of joy are still possible in Heaven.

The Lord has allowed you to suffer like this for many long years now, and what at present seems like a nightmare is known by its real name as 'stratagems of love and marvels of his divine attention'.

I know that this is how you see it, but I know too that by my repeating it again on his behalf and in his name, this truth will become for you once more a life-giving grace. I am saying it again, because there are some things so beautiful that they can never be exhausted in the re-telling.

For my own part, I try my best to make each day a long act of communion with the Holy Spirit and with Mary. To unite oneself with God's will is to unite oneself with the Love of God: and this means uniting oneself to the love of that Love which is the Holy Spirit. It all becomes so simple.

In Ea".



Source: L.J. Cardinal Suenens,

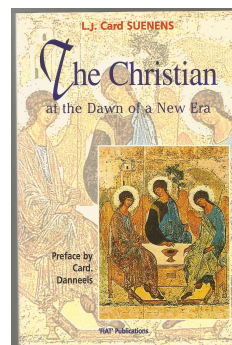
The Christian at the dawn of a new Era,
pp. 161-165.

"Whatever the gift that you're willing to present to God, do not forget to entrust it to Mary, because grace goes back to the donor through the same channel that brought it."

(St Bernard, 12th century)

We are very often invited to offer reductions on costs for sending rosaries and various evangelization tools to economically weak countries. We are grateful for financial support.

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