

Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time – 08-24-2025

“My son, do not disdain the discipline of the Lord or lose heart when reprov'd by him; for whom the Lord loves, he disciplines; he scourges every son he acknowledges. Endure your trials as discipline.”

Life is full of trials – physical, psychological, emotional, moral and of course, spiritual. Nothing is easy but if we endure them as best we can our trials become as discipline from the Lord who loves us and allows them only for our benefit and that of others.

We cannot escape trials no matter what religion we belong to or do not belong to. Whether we have supernatural faith or no faith at all trials will be ours at some point simply because we are members of the human race.

However, without the cross of Jesus Christ any and all suffering can be relegated to the category of complete nonsense at best and pure evil at worst.

But it doesn't have to be a meaningless and hopeless struggle until one day we finally take our last breath.

Suffering, in itself, is what the Church refers to as a physical evil but because God chose to assume a human nature and suffer and die for us we can now make sense of our own personal suffering by uniting it to Christ – the old idea of offering it up – and

consequently God can use it for our own sanctification and the sanctification of others as well.

In the gospel today someone asked Jesus, "Lord, will only a few people be saved?"

Jesus answered him saying, "Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I tell you, will attempt to enter but will not be strong enough."

For sure the narrow gate is wrought with trials of every sort.

In the strictest sense the gate is Jesus Christ and what makes it so narrow is his passion and death.

But in the broader sense the gate is the Holy Catholic Church and what makes this gate so narrow is her teachings.

We need the Holy Catholic Church and her teachings in order to truly know Jesus and how to follow him in the narrow way of his passion.

The consequences are high. If we don't try our best Jesus said the door will be locked and outside there will be wailing and grinding of teeth.

And we can never forget that many others are counting on us even if they don't know it. By embracing our crosses in union with Jesus we are participating in the salvation of the world. As I said before we participate in our own sanctification and the

sanctification of others. Our Lady said at Fatima, that many souls go to hell because there is no one there to pray for them.

The fact that so many have children, family members and dear friends who have left the faith should be incentive enough to at least try to offer up whatever suffering comes our way for them.

As difficult as it may seem we can never become discouraged because we think we're just not strong enough, good enough or even faithful enough. That's exactly what the devil wants us to believe.

The fact is we will never be strong enough, we will never be good enough, we will never be faithful enough to follow in the footsteps of the passion of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ by our own power.

We need his power which comes to us through Grace.

Our Lady is the Mediatrix of all Grace. She wants to fill us with hope and courage, and trust in her son so that we will never lose heart and see every trial as discipline from the Lord who loves us with an infinite love and desires our salvation even more than we do ourselves.

My sons and daughters, do not disdain the discipline of the Lord or lose heart when reproved by him; for whom the Lord loves, he disciplines; he scourges every son and daughter he acknowledges. Endure your trials as discipline."