

Joy and Accepted Suffering

Joy and Accepted Suffering are two virtues contained in our SHCJ spirituality.

Can the two coexist? Yes. But Accepted suffering is the least talked about and accepted spirit/virtue of the Holy Child Jesus.

Our Cornelia had a mix of these two. Her life was characterized by the deep joy of getting converted, married and bearing five beautiful children.

But suffering came in its full force when Cornelia had to give up her lovely marriage and husband because Pierce demanded that of her to embrace God's will, the tragic loss of Frank and others... Yet Cornelia remained steadfast because she had her focus on Christ who gave indescribable meaning to her sufferings; she had the grace and she bore all patiently like the mother of Jesus shared in his martyrdom. No wonder she says to us; how ungrateful it is to higgie with Our Lord over the daily crosses of this short pilgrimage – Cornelia Connelly and in a well-known verse of her song, she encourages us to -'Be grateful for every little Cross, for it is suffering alone which brings, to the holy peace of God, which passed all understanding'.

Joy is possible amidst pain and suffering where one accepts with great peace whatever comes. Joy is a sign of God's presence. Our sufferings remind us of the Cross, a sign of God's presence as well. In suffering, we connect to something deeper and greater than our suffering. Suffering brings purification and binds us to Christ.

How do I sustain joy amidst suffering, sadness, pain and hurts?

One way is to return to our source who is God and remain focused on Him who will give meaning to our suffering, bearing all with us, then peace comes and then joy... in finding and accepting God's Will in our pain and suffering.

Do I always unit my sufferings with that of Jesus? When next you experience deep suffering or sorrow and lack the words to pray, Look at a Crucifix. What do you see? You see the injustice done to God's only Son. The hate, the pain, the insults, the rejection... Even the Son of God was captured, scourged and put to death.

What last experience of suffering made so much meaning for me?

Cornelia reminds us to 'go and accept whatever God sends, whether it be joy or suffering, praise or humiliation'.

Again, Cornelia says; the year has passed away and all its crosses with it – Let us look back and see – no bones were broken in carrying them! - CC 55:32. This is GRACE.

'The key to honor in the kingdom of God is to drink the cup of suffering...' - Bishop Robert Barron.