



Living the Gospel

Chiara Lubich, Word of Life, March 2005
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“My God,
my God,
why have you
forsaken me?»
(Mt 27:46)



One of the biggest mysteries in life is suffering.

We all want to avoid it, but sooner or later, we all have to suffer in some way. It might be a headache that makes it hard to study or the humiliation of failing an exam, or a car accident that takes the life of a friend or family member. It might be the anguish of experiencing war or terrorism or a natural disaster.

We feel helpless in front of suffering.

Even if we are with someone who loves us, they often cannot help us to overcome the pain. At other times, it's enough that someone is there to share it with us, even without saying anything.

That's what Jesus did. He came on earth to be near each one of us, with every person on earth, sharing everything in our life. He took on himself all that makes us suffer, to the point of crying out in pain:

“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?»

When Jesus was on the cross, at a certain moment he seemed to feel infinitely far from his Father. But with incredible, unimaginable effort, he declared his love and abandoned himself totally to God.

“FATHER, INTO YOUR HANDS I COMMEND MY SPIRIT” (Lk 23:46)

When we feel great pain, or any kind of suffering, we too can make the huge effort to believe in God's love and tell him:

“I LOVE YOU, JESUS FORSAKEN, IN THIS SUFFERING. YOU TAKE MY PAIN AS YOUR OWN AND COME TO BE WITH ME IN THIS MOMENT. I EMBRACE YOU, I WANT YOU!”

THIS LOVE ATTRACTS THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: PEACE, LIGHT, AND A SPECIAL JOY SHINES OUT IN US.



EXPERIENCE

A while ago, all of a sudden, for no apparent reason, I decided that my life would be a lot easier if I stopped trying to live the Gospel. I wouldn't have to make the effort to be the first to love or to love everyone. I stopped believing in God because it all seemed useless, almost stupid! I really lost Jesus! It was a terrible time. I felt so alone and I wasn't happy at all. One part of me wanted to have Jesus back again, but the other part rejected him. I prayed a lot, even though I didn't think God existed. One Sunday, I went to evening Mass but I really didn't listen at all because I didn't feel like it. I was really sad.

Then I looked up and saw the crucifix with Jesus hanging on the cross. He was crucified and cried out because he felt abandoned by his Father. That crucifix was very special, because I felt abandoned, too. It seemed he had come just for me!

In that moment, I went deep inside my heart and accepted my pain. I embraced Jesus because I recognized him hidden in my sadness and in my doubts.

I felt like exploding for joy! I was so happy! I felt I had found a great treasure! I thanked God because never in my life had I experienced such great love.

(A. Spain)

