

Come to Me
God of All Comfort

Reflect

1. What physical, emotional, or spiritual pain have you experienced?
2. Has there been a time when you feared for your life?
3. How do you help others experiencing pain?

Read Your Bible

Matthew 11:28-30

2 Corinthians 1:3-11

Apply God's Word to Your Life

1. Why is it significant that Paul begins writing about suffering with the word "praise"?
2. How many outcomes of suffering can you find in 2 Cor. 1:3-11?
3. What can happen when we share in the sufferings of Christ according to verse 5?
4. What do you think the "patient endurance" of verse 6 looks like?
5. Why is it significant that The Apostle Paul despaired of life itself?
6. What is the solution to the despair mentioned in verse 8 that Paul reveals in verse 9?
7. What is the role of prayer in the situation of suffering and sorrow?
8. What is the hope you find in the midst of human suffering?
9. What can you do for others who are suffering?

Conclusion

In a highly liturgical funeral, the entrance rite takes place at the back of the sanctuary. From that place, the presiding minister declares selected verses from 2 Corinthians; "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God." The congregation then replies; "Thanks be to God." What a strange and yet faithful way to begin a time where grief is shared...with praise! Yet, this is exactly how St. Paul begins speaking to pain, suffering, and despair. When we begin with praise it changes our outlook on suffering altogether. The praise focuses us on Jesus, who has shared our sufferings, and has promised to share his everlasting life. This praise and focus on Jesus empowers us to endure even great suffering. Not only can we endure suffering in this promise, but we can also have the mindset where we can help others who are in sorrow.

Prayer

God of all comfort, blanket us with Your compassion and mercy. Help us to look to Jesus in our suffering. Give us eyes to see that Jesus knows our pain. Establish our faith that we might believe Jesus has overcome all things, even death. May this faith bestow comfort, strength, peace, and hope. And by Your Spirit, may we engage your hurting world with this message of living hope. In Jesus' name. Amen.