

## Take-Home: Deep-Dive, Why Suffering?

### WHAT WE FOUND

We put the oldest question into God's own book and watched what he does with it. Job demanded an explanation chapter after chapter and received a presence instead, and a correction he accepted; I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you; and God declared the protester more right than the friends with their tidy answers, even while humbling him. On the Cross, God incarnate prayed Israel's lament himself: my God, my God, why have you forsaken me. The Church's first word on the question is a refusal of quick answers, and her sentence about permission joins Augustine's two truths: God, respecting creaturely freedom, permits evil that he is good and powerful enough to turn to good, and Exhibit A is the Cross itself. The last page promises not an explanation but an abolition: every tear, wiped by hand.

#### VOICES OF THE CHURCH: ST. AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

The Catechism (CCC 311) quotes his *Enchiridion* in substance: almighty God, being supremely good, would never allow any evil whatsoever in his works unless he were so all-powerful and good as to cause good to emerge from evil itself. And evil, St. Augustine teaches in substance, is no created thing but a privation: a wound in the good.

#### VOICES OF THE CHURCH: ST. JOHN PAUL II

In *Salvifici Doloris*, St. John Paul II teaches, in substance, that suffering united to Christ's is taken up into his redemptive work: never good in itself, never wasted when joined to the Cross.

#### VOICES OF THE CHURCH: ST. THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX

In *Story of a Soul*, St. Thérèse describes her final trial of faith: a darkness in which she chose, in substance, to sit at the table of unbelievers and offer the night for them. A Doctor of the Church spent her dying months inside the dark this session honors, and made it intercession.

**LIVE IT THIS WEEK**

- Do one act of silent presence for a sufferer this week: show up, bring food, sit, and do not explain anything.
- Pray Psalm 22 once, aloud, all the way through, and notice where it turns.

**SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE**

*“He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more.”* Revelation 21:4 (RSV2CE)

**GOING FURTHER**

Read the book of Job's frame this month: chapters 1 to 2 and 38 to 42. Skip nothing in 42.

**CATECHISM REFERENCES**

CCC 309; 311; 312; 324; 1505.