

FEBRUARY 16, 2025 FATHER JOHN BERTAIO

Always starting off with a question.

Have you been diagnosed or know of someone who's close to you who has gone through a bad diagnosis, a bad illness experience? A few years ago I went through some life changing health experiences, and when I got a diagnosis I was very blessed and very lucky to have a good friend with me. However, he too was speechless with the news. No matter how much he tried to cheer me up, heh, it didn't work. I remained silent. And then the words of my late father came to mind when he too was diagnosed with a life-threatening illness many years before he died. His words then were, "Let's place ourselves in God's hands. Let's place ourselves in God's hands." It continued, "He wants the best for all of us. We must have faith in God. We must have faith in Him no matter what." At that time, my prayer life changed and so did my attitude towards life. Gradually, as I too was not well, I was transformed into being more accepting and appreciative of life every day, more than before, and God's loving protection upon me.

Here's a reflection from one of my sources that I hope you can appreciate as much as I did when I was searching through and praying for these words of reflection to you. Maybe they can be of comfort to you or someone who is close to you. But again, first a question. Have you... have you encountered misfortune, grief, or a tragic loss in your life? How did you respond? Was it with anger? Was it with fear? Asking the question, "Why me? Why that person? So why, they haven't done anything wrong?" Or was it with faith? Was it with the patience and the hope that God is in charge. You see we all know that we see and hear from one time to another that no one will escape the trials of life, thereby grow from that. Such as pain, suffering, sickness, and health issues.

When Jesus began to teach his disciples he gave them a way of happiness. Happiness that goes beyond every difficulty and trouble that we can weigh us down with grief and despair. Jesus began his sermon on the Mount by addressing the issue of where true happiness can be found. You see, the word beatitude literally means happiness or blessedness. Jesus' way of happiness demands a transformation, but one that happens within us, a spiritual special transformation into surrendering to him with great love and, of course, with great confidence. A conversion of heart is so, so important. Also a conversion of mind which can only come about through the gift and the working of the Holy Spirit of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit that received at Confirmation, Baptism, and any other Sacraments we received, and others. And I'm coming to that one.

So, are you suffering or do you know of someone who may be suffering? Here's another one that can give you truly powerful, powerful blessings and God's grace. You know where I'm going with this. Go to a priest. Make a very good confession. Don't rush it. Then, of course, see a doctor. And most of all, know that Jesus loves you more than you love Him, believe it or not. He loves us more than we love Him. He wants the best for all of us. He wants the best that we can live this life, whether there's some suffering, whether you're trying to help someone or not, He wants us to do the best because this life is just such a short journey. Let's make it work. Let me close with a prayer.

Lord Jesus, increase my hunger for you and show me you above all else to find the perfect joy... ..in accepting and doing your will. May you have the joy of accepting and doing your will, the will of God, no matter what.