

I. PATIENT DATA

Chaplain: Robert Baral

days in hospital - 4; length of visit - 30 minutes;

Unit - surgical

Patient – AB, 35+ year old female, marital status not disclosed

Religion - Catholic

Significant Others: Mother @ bedside, child @ home with family

Theme: “New Diagnosis of Breast Cancer and Generational Grief:

GOD, Do You Afflict Us to Draw Us Closer to Your Love?”

II. FACTS OF THE CASE

Recent new diagnosis of bilateral breast cancer from mammograms, done after positive DNA testing. Multiple cases of women with breast cancer in this family, involving a lot of suffering and deaths over several generations.

III. BACKGROUND INFO

The unit Social Worker has asked me to visit as I make my rounds on the unit. The patient’s mother is at the bedside. They claim they speak little English but only Spanish. Most conversation with them was via hospital interpreter. Patient identifies herself as Catholic. Her family attends a local Parish. Her child attends Christian education there.

IV. CHAPLAIN’S PREPARATION

I knew patient was a relatively young woman with breast cancer and has just had bilateral mastectomies. I felt a shudder of horror deep in me at a picture of a young wife and mother dying, not wanting to let go of life or her family, and the aftermath of the heartbroken husband and children grieving over her grave for the rest of their lives. I pictured my own sister-in-law, who died of breast cancer with metastasis to the lungs so many years ago, my widowed brother and his 3 little children being left in that very situation.

I was aware to be careful to keep my feelings around my own family history of my sister-in-law's death from breast cancer under control, so that I could listen and hear this patient's story attentively. But I also knew this would be a potentially powerful bridge to the patient at the same time to enable me to connect with greater empathy. I prayed what has become my hospital Chaplain prayer, that of Saint Francis of Assisi, "LORD, make me an instrument of Thy Peace!"¹ I asked GOD to help me be of whatever comfort He intended for me to be to this lady and her mother.

V. INITIAL OBSERVATIONS

The lights were dim. This is the bed by the door. The dividing curtain for bed 2 was fully drawn closed. There are 2 chairs by the patient's left side and a 3rd free chair between the beds. The patient's intravenous stand includes a "Patient Controlled Analgesic" intravenous pump with narcotics for pain control. The patient's eyes were downcast. She spoke so quietly I could barely hear her.

Her gown was pulled up high, but revealed just the very top of extensive white chest bandages. Her mother joins us. I stand as she enters room and introduce myself to her and the hospital interpreter. I give the patient's mother my seat next to her daughter and pull up the 3rd chair on the patient's right side.

VI. THE VISIT

C = Chaplain; P = Patient AB; M = Mother Z

C1 – [I have called for the hospital interpreter. I knock on the door. The Nurse is at the bedside. The lights are off and it is dark.] Hello Mrs. B. I am Chaplain Bob. May I come in?

P1 – Yes.

C2 – Hello, Mrs. B. [I extend my hand.]

P2 – [Patient gives me her hand. Her eyes are downcast.] Hello.

M1 – [Patient's mother enters room. I stand up to greet her and introduce myself. I arrange chairs for her to sit next to her daughter.]

C3 – Do you ladies speak a little English?

¹ 1, Saint Francis, "Prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi." Catholic Community Forum. Retrieved 9/15/2008. <http://www.catholic-forum.com/saints/pray0027.htm>

P3 – No. Maybe a little. [Brief conversation about the patient’s physical comfort in English. The hospital interpreter arrives.]

C4 – [I stand to greet the interpreter.] Thank you for coming. [I sit back down and address the patient and mother] Let’s start over. [I reintroduce myself.]

M2 – My name is Z. I am A’s mother. [Good eye contact with mother. She smiles warmly.]

C5 – Can I turn on a little light for you, A?

P4 – No, thank you. [Pt’s eyes are downcast.]

C5 – Okay. I would like to talk more about what you were sharing with me before the interpreter arrived. You were sharing how you were feeling.

M3 – She has been in pain since the surgery.

C6 – I see. Are you resting a little more comfortably today, A?

M4 – No. The pain is still so bad today.

C7 – I am sorry to hear that. I see you’ve been with us for 4 days. What problem brought you into the hospital?

M5 – She had to have surgery.

C8 – And what was the surgery for?

P5 – I had mastectomies. Both sides. They found cancer. [Patient continues to look down. She speaks so softly, I can barely hear her. She becomes tearful.]

C9 – I hear that is very difficult for you and your family to deal with. [Silence.] May I offer you my hand? [I extend my hand.]

P6 – [Patient looks up at me. Solid eye contact. She takes my hand. I let a few moments pass before speaking again. If this were my loved one, I would be crushed. It occurs to me, it once was. The mother takes the patient’s other hand.]

C10 – How did your Doctor find the cancer?

P7 – They did DNA testing and then did mammography scans, which showed cancer. We were prepared for this. I knew I would get it.

M6 – [Mother is now silent and let’s her daughter speak for herself. I continue to look over to her. A loving mother’s smile is holding back what looks like an imminent flood of tears. Like Mary at the foot of The Cross of JESUS at Golgotha.]

P8 – [I feel like I want to join the mother with my tears. They do not come.] My family has had a lot of people who have had breast cancer. A lot of people in my family have died from breast cancer. So we were prepared. We knew I would also get cancer.

C11 – Your family has had a lot of sickness and death from breast cancer. That must be very difficult to deal with. [Silence. Gross understatement.] Where do you go for strength to get through all this?

P9 – We're Catholic. Our family goes to a local Parish.

C12 – [I need to rephrase this question. My intent has been lost in the translation.] How does your Faith help you in dealing with your illness?

P10 – Yes, we have Faith. Our Faith is in Doctors, GOD and prayer.

C13 – How does GOD help you get through all this?

P11 – His Love gets us through.

C14 – [I reflect back and affirm our mutual Faith.] His Love is The Source of our lives. [I am looking into the patient's eyes. I feel myself tearing up.]

P12 - GOD is testing us, but not punishing us, to draw us closer to Himself.

C15 – How so?

P13 – When we have more trouble, we have to rely more on His Love.

[Nurse enters room and asks patient about her pain level. Patient breaks eye contact with me. She lets go of my hand, answering in English. Nurse gives more medication for comfort.]

P14 – [The Nurse leaves. Patient is looking down again.] Thank you for visiting me. [Silence. The pain – physical, emotional, spiritual – is too much to face further right now for Mrs. B.]

C16 – Z, A, I am very thankful to have been able to be here with you ladies today. [I look up at the patient's mother and she gives me a nonverbal nod towards her daughter, who has closed her eyes. Mrs. B is becoming groggy.] Do you need to rest now, or would you like to talk a little bit more?

P15 – [The patient switches to English. I've broken through the language barrier pseudo-wall.] I would like to rest. But could you say a prayer? [I observe tears on her cheek. The mother offers me a tissue from a tissue box at the bedside. We dab her tears together, one of us on each side of A.]

C17 – Your Faith and your awareness of GOD's Love is so profound and moving. Let's offer these things up to our Lord JESUS CHRIST together.

P16 – Can you read something on GOD's Love? [I read from The Gideon Bible on the patient's table, which is in English, with their okay.]

I JOHN 4:12-16

¹² ...If we love one another, GOD abides in us, and His Love has been perfected in us.

¹³ By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His SPIRIT.

¹⁴ And we have seen and testify that The Father has sent The Son as Savior of the world.

¹⁵ Whoever confesses that JESUS is The Son of GOD, GOD abides in him, and he in GOD.

¹⁶ And we have known and believed The Love that GOD has for us. GOD is Love, and he who abides in Love abides in GOD, and GOD in him. ²

C18 – [The 4 of us - myself, patient A, her Mom Z and translator - hold hands. I pray in English briefly for GOD's Peace and encouragement for Mrs. B, her Mom, her child and other loved ones. I focus on the patient's theme of GOD's Love, drawing us closer to Him and to one another. I close our prayer with The Our Father, The Hail Mary and The Glory Be in Spanish as the patient and her Mom say The Words with me. I offer to arrange a visit by the hospital Priest for Anointing of The Sick, which the patient accepts.]

P17 – [Patient opens here eyes and makes solid eye contact with me again. She is tearful. So am I. She grips my hand tightly. I place my other hand over her hand. Mrs. B returns to English.] Thank you, Chaplain Bob. Can you come back and visit me again?

C19 – Of Course, A. You rest now in GOD's Love. Thank you so much, ladies, for letting me be with you today. [My voice is strained.] Thank you for sharing these precious things with me. I'll be back tomorrow on my usual rounds. [I stand and offer my hand to the patient's mother, then to the interpreter. I then exit the room.]

VII. PATIENT-FAMILY MEMBER'S EXPRESSED CONCERNS

1. new diagnosis of breast cancer; 2. bilateral mastectomy 2 days ago; 3. generational family grief over many loved ones who suffered and died from breast cancer; 4. struggling to make sense of breast cancer related suffering and deaths in family; 5. ongoing physical suffering; 6. questions of Faith.

² 2, NKJV, I JOHN 4:12-16.

VIII. YOUR SPIRITUAL ASSESSMENT

1. Patient fearful that she may die of breast cancer, and endure lengthy suffering, like many other women in her family over several generations. 2. Patient struggling to make sense of cancer history in her family and now her own cancer. 3. Patient feels GOD is not punishing, but testing her and her family, in order to draw her and her family closer to Him. 4. This view of GOD does not agree with her understanding of GOD as The caring, merciful and loving GOD that she believes in, nor with how the family's Faith Tradition teaches Who GOD is. DEEP DISTRESS hovering at times on edge of DESPAIR.

IX. PASTORAL SPIRITUAL CARE PROVIDED

1. Used hospital interpreter & bilingual conversation, Scripture reading & prayer to bridge language barrier; 2. empathetic listening to patient and mother; 3. provided safe space for patient to share her story, feelings and concerns; 4. offered relevant prayer as requested; 5. offered to arrange for Sacraments from hospital Priest; 6. thanked patient and mother for allowing me to visit.; 7. did not challenge patient's efforts to make sense of the suffering of her and her family, but reflected back to assure she knew she was heard; 8. Focused on patient's stated desire for GOD's Love; 9. made follow up visit the next day as the patient requested.

X. OBSERVED OUTCOME

1. Clearer and deeper connection between myself, patient and her mother using hospital interpreter staff at bedside, rather than using language translation bedside phone; 2. patient felt heard; 3. patient felt free to share parts of her story, feelings and concerns, but limited by her physical pain issues; 4. Patient requested Scripture reading and prayer, which seemed of comfort to both; 5. offered up patient's shared theme of GOD's Love in prayer; 6. Patient and mother expressed thanks for visit, with patient requesting revisit; 7. Patient accepted offer of visit from hospital Priest for Sacraments.

XI. FUTURE PASTORAL OPPORTUNITIES PRESENTED

1. Why does the patient believe that GOD is intentionally afflicting her and her family, so that they may be forced to draw nearer to Him, in order to receive His Love? 2. What kind of experiences has her family had in the past with other loved ones suffering and dying of breast cancer? 3. How does this shape the patient's understanding of GOD's Love? 4. Why is the patient distant to The Church? 5. Is the patient married to the father of her child? What kind of involvement does he have in her life? If not, why not? Is this a contributing cause to her feelings of distance from GOD and The Church?

XII. USING THE SANDER'S SPIRITUAL ASSESSMENT SCALE^{3 4}

1 - Interpersonal Assessment = 3 of 5. How the sufferer identifies and feels levels of support from others within relationships.

Patient seems to have close relationship with mother. Patient has at least 1 school aged child. No mention of a husband or father of her child. Gives impression that she has close support of other family.

2 - Isolation vs Spiritual Community = 2 of 5.
Degree of connectedness with ones Faith community.

Patient reports she is Catholic. Although her family attends a local Parish, she is not currently doing so. She sends her child to a local Catholic Church for religious instruction and sometimes goes to that Church to pray. For whatever reason(s), she seems distant to The Church.

3 - Alienation from vs Commitment to a Loving Deity = 2 of 5.
Degree of sense of connection with a Loving and Caring GOD.

Patient has Faith as a Christian, finding comfort in Scripture & prayer. She feels GOD is "not punishing, but testing" her with her breast cancer and the many deaths in her family from breast cancer. She feels GOD needs to do this to draw her and her family closer to Himself and Divine Love.

³ 3, Sanders, "A Comprehensive Approach to Pastoral Care." Chaplaincy Today, Vol. 22, No. 1, 2006, p 7-9.

⁴ 3, Ibid, p 7-9. Each item on the scale is graded from minimum to maximum from "1" to "5." The grade of "0" denotes "not assessable at this time."

4 - Trust vs Distrust = 3 of 5.

Degree to which the sufferer is able to trust The Divine and others to deal with present crisis.

Patient reports her Faith is in “Doctors, GOD and prayer.” Note the order of sources of hope. Patient feels that it is “GOD’s Love that gets us through” re difficult times. This suggests the patient feels that, if it were not for the patient’s breast cancer and the familial history of suffering and death from breast cancer, they would not know of GOD’s Love as deeply.

5 - Helplessness vs Interdependence = 3 of 5.

Ability to be appropriately dependent versus independent upon GOD and others to maximize positive coping.

Patient is fully compliant with prescribed care from her Doctors and Nurses. She openly receives her mother’s support and tenderness at the bedside. She has followed her Doctor’s regimen of breast cancer screening, which revealed her present cancer. Patient prays to GOD, but exact nature of prayers not known to me now.

6 - No Purpose vs Purpose = 2 of 5.

Degree of life purpose within current stressful situations that hinders vs aids positive management of trials.

Patient presumably finds purpose in being a parent and in being part of her family, though we did not talk about this directly. Very fatalistic life view about her own new breast cancer, “We were prepared, I knew I this would happen.” Understanding of “GOD testing” her and her family with breast cancer – and the suffering and death the comes with it – in order to draw them closer to Him is a great hindrance to the patient finding life purpose in this illness. I expect this will hinder a more positive management of this catastrophe.

7 - Hopelessness vs Theological Confidence = 1 of 5.

Degree of confidence in GOD, others and self from a Faith perspective that gives assurance of dealing with present suffering and challenges.

The patient expects to suffer and die, as have many of her past family members, with this breast cancer. I worry that patient’s view of meaning of her cancer illness, being from the hand of GOD to test and draw her closer to His Love, has the potential to shatter her understanding of Divine Love.

8 - No Meaning vs Meaning = 1 of 5.

How much the sufferer finds meaning and purpose within the present stressful situation.

Patient is struggling to find a positive meaning and purpose in her life and Faith through this new devastating illness. From the experiences of other loved ones, she knows how difficult this will be as she recovers from the surgery and faces further treatment options.

9 - Resentment vs Reconciliation = 2 of 5.

Ability to establish intimacy and love. Degree to which the sufferer is able to receive and give love and intimacy towards GOD and others under duress.

Patient seems to have a close relationship with her mother in the midst of this illness, which is very early on. How she is relating to her child and the father of her child is unknown to me. In spite of patient's verbalized view of GOD drawing her closer to His Love through her understanding of testing her with cancer, I believe she has anger towards GOD. Her construct is highly unfair in its effects, which brings feelings of alienation from GOD.

10 - No Integration vs Integration = 1 of 5.

Wisdom. Degree to which one is able to integrate current difficulties into one's meaning and fabric of one's life.

The patient's integration of her new cancer illness into her life is just beginning. I fear her finding of a positive meaning at present is minimal. It is my prayer patient can find another way of understanding her illness and suffering within her Faith Tradition that will be more positive and helpful.

Total Score = 20/50, or grade of 40% in spiritual wellbeing. As with many of these tools, assigning scores to each category can be highly subjective. But it is clear that this patient is in severe spiritual distress, bordering on despair, and a priority case for further pastoral care. ⁵

⁵ 4, Adapted from "Chaplaincy Services Handbook," The Reading Hospital Medical Center, West Reading, PA. 2005, p 42-43. **Coping Well** – patient "cope[s] well with their circumstances by using well-rooted spiritual resources and emotional maturity, even in dire circumstances;" **Spiritual Concerns** – "a pre crisis state, wherein a person's desire and ability to rely on existing spiritual resources increases as they feel more at risk;" **Spiritual Distress** - "a crisis state requiring a pastoral response that helps draw out and identify points of distress and helps the person reframe their beliefs and values to better meet the current challenge;" **Spiritual Despair** – a deep withdrawal and failure of coping of the soul, which "requires a longer-term plan involving regular contacts with the

XIII. ANALYZING SUFFERING THROUGH JOB'S EXAMPLE

This patient has concluded that GOD is intentionally afflicting her and her family with breast cancer, and the accompanying suffering and death, in order to draw her and her family closer to His Love. I do not believe that this is so. This patient is like Job sitting in the midst of his pain and suffering, struggling to hold on to the integrity of Faith in GOD in the midst of pain, but refusing to let go of GOD's Love.

But unlike Job, this patient teeters on the edge of losing sight of The Divine Love which surrounds her, in spite of her confession of The Same, because she mistakenly attributes to The Almighty that which is not part of His Nature – namely inflicting evil upon us to **force** us to accept His Love – although she does not realize this. GOD is Sovereign. He knows all. Yet evil still comes upon His people. But through suffering, we can **choose** to become closer to GOD's Love, accepting His Grace.

Recall Job sitting in the midst of his agony, having lost his children, his wealth, his position, and then his health. As he sits in the rubble of his life, his body afflicted with sore boils, his wife offers the advice in JOB 2:9, "...Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Curse GOD, and die." But Job replies, "...Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? Shall we receive good at The Hand of GOD, and shall we not receive evil?" The narrative adds, "In all this did not Job sin with his lips." ⁶

Even so, Job's worst struggles of Faith were to come, when at his lowest point of despair, he came to feel desolate and abandoned by The Presence of The LORD. So he cried out in bitter darkness from the depths of his soul in JOB 19:23-24, "Oh that my words were now written! Oh that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever!" ⁷ Unspoken in this patient's spiritual despair is the question, "O GOD, if You are there still, do you hear my cry?"

Chaplain, identification of the points of despair, reframing ideas of hope and a greater degree of interdisciplinary cooperation."

⁶ 5, KJV, JOB 2:9-10.

⁷ 5, KJV, JOB 19:23-24.

Charles Swindoll observes of Job-moments of deepest despair in our lives in “When GOD Is Silent,” that when we feel total hopelessness and despair, the clouds of darkness obscure GOD’s Love standing forever beside us: “First, there are days too dark for the sufferer to see light. Second, there are experiences too extreme for the hurting to have hope... Third, there are valleys too deep for the anguished to find relief.”⁸

Swindoll observes of such deepest despair, “It’s then our minds play tricks on us, making us think that not even GOD cares. Wrong!” Swindoll sites Corrie Ten Boom’s quote in the midst of horrific suffering, “There is no pit so deep, but that GOD is not deeper still!”⁹ In the midst of such times of deep sorrow, is it not then, that GOD answers us out of the whirlwind of His Presence and Comfort, “I AM with you still, as is My Love?”

It is then that our realization of His Love becomes most vivid, as Job confessed in JOB 19:25-27, “For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at The Latter Day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see GOD: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.”¹⁰

XIV. NOTHING CAN SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF GOD

GOD loves us through all circumstances in our lives, in all our conditions, even when we turn completely from Him and forget that His Grace is ever pouring out upon us from The Sacred Heart of JESUS. His Love is so great for us, that He gave His only begotten Son to redeem us back to Himself.

As Saint John says in I JOHN 4:9-10, “In this was manifested The Love of GOD toward us, because that GOD sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is Love, not that we loved GOD, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”¹¹ The Love is already there. We are called to receive it in humility and thanksgiving.

⁸ 6, Swindoll, “When GOD Is Silent,” p 45, paragraph 2-4.

⁹ 6, Ibid., p 45, paragraph 5.

¹⁰ 5, KJV, JOB 19:25-27.

¹¹ 5, KJV, I JOHN 4:9-10.

Not that the world, the flesh and the devil don't war against us when we embrace The Love of GOD. But GOD does not afflict us with intentional cruelty in order to **force** us to draw closer to Him, to oblige us to dwell in His Love! Rather, He calls us. The Price of our redemption has already been paid in full. He invites us to cooperate with His Grace. There is indeed nothing that can separate us from The Divine Love and Mercy in CHRIST JESUS. But our turning away can obscure That Reality to us.

Saint Paul says in ROMANS 8:35-39, "Who shall separate us from The Love of CHRIST? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from The Love of GOD, Which is in CHRIST JESUS our Lord." ¹²

XV. GOD DOES NOT INFLICT MORAL EVIL TO FORCE GOOD

Saint Thomas Aquinas asks, "...why did GOD not create a world so perfect that no evil could exist in it? With infinite power GOD could always create something better." Aquinas answers his own question, "But with infinite wisdom and goodness, GOD freely willed to create a world in a state of journeying toward its ultimate perfection..." towards the restoration and redemption of both men and creation. "With physical good, there exists also physical evil, as long as creation has not reached [restored] Perfection." ¹³

This patient attributes moral evil to The LORD, thinking that He intentionally afflicts her and her family with breast cancer in order to **force** them to draw her closer to Himself, so that they will be obliged to receive His Love. The disease itself, and its long aftermath, are part of the fallen state of creation corrupted by The Fall. But in seeing her illness in this light, this patient is paradoxically erecting a wall between herself and GOD that threatens to obscure The Light of GOD's Grace and Love, Which calls her to His Peace and Comfort.

¹² 5, KJV, ROMANS 8:35-39.

¹³ 7, CCC, # 310, "Providence and The Scandal of Evil," p 92, "St. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiae Unitas I, 25, 6 and Summa Contra Gentiles III, 71."

Saint Aquinas and Saint Augustine agree, "...Thus has moral evil, incommensurably more harmful than physical evil, entered the world. [But] GOD is in no way, directly or indirectly, the cause of moral evil." ¹⁴ As Saint Augustine then answers further, "For Almighty GOD..., because He is Supremely Good, would never allow any evil whatsoever to exist in His works, if He were not so all-powerful and good as to cause good to emerge from evil itself." ¹⁵

As GOD says to us in JEREMIAH 29:11-14, "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith The LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon Me, and ye shall go and pray unto Me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith The LORD: and I will turn away your captivity..." ¹⁶ Therefore Saint Paul concludes in ROMANS 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love GOD, to them who are the called according to His Purpose." ¹⁷

XVI. THE CRUCIFIXION AND DIVINE MERCY

Saint Faustina holds the title in The Church of "The Apostle of Divine Mercy." The Diary of Saint Faustina offers answers of comfort and encouragement here. In particular is her "Third Day" prayer for "all devout and faithful souls" in her 9-day "Novena" prayers. ¹⁸ I think this might help this patient begin to explore different ways of understanding Who GOD is, the nature of His Love, how He is Present for her in her illness and finding a more helpful meaning of her suffering:

¹⁴ 7, CCC, # 311, "St Augustine, De Libero Arbitrio 1, 1, 2: PL 32, 1223; St. Aquinas, Summa theologiae Unitas I-II, 79, 1."

¹⁵ 7, CCC, # 311, St. Augustine, Enchiridion 3, 11: PL 40, 236."

¹⁶ 5, KJV, JEREMIAH 29:11-14.

¹⁷ 5, KJV, ROMANS 8:28.

¹⁸ 8, Saint Faustina, Chaplet of Divine Mercy, The Divine Mercy Novenas, "3. Third Day (Easter Sunday)- all devout and faithful souls." The Apostles of Divine Mercy of San Fernando Valley. Retrieved 11/15/2008.

<http://www.apostlesofdivinemeracy.org/Novena.html>.

“Most Merciful JESUS, from the treasury of Your Mercy, You impart Your Graces in great abundance to each and all. Receive us into the abode of Your Most Compassionate Heart and never let us escape from It. We beg this of You by that most wondrous Love for The heavenly Father with which Your Heart burns so fiercely.”

Saint Fauastina writes further, “The miracles of Mercy are impenetrable. Neither the sinner nor just one will fathom them. When You cast upon us an eye of pity, You draw us all closer to Your Love.” “Eternal Father, turn Your merciful gaze upon faithful souls, as upon the inheritance of Your Son. For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, grant them Your blessing and surround them with Your constant protection. Thus may they never fail in love or lose the treasure of The holy Faith, but rather, with all The Hosts of Angels and Saints, may they glorify Your boundless Mercy for endless ages. AMEN.”¹⁹

From The Greatest Physical and Moral Evil in the universe, The Crucifixion of The Son of GOD on The Cross, GOD has brought The Greatest Physical and Moral Good – the redemption of man and creation back to Himself. JOHN 3:16, “For GOD so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”²⁰ Helping this lady reexamine her conclusions about suffering and GOD, seeing instead that The LORD desires to turn evil for good in our lives – inviting His Love to shine more brightly - is the key to helping her emerge from despair to hope in preparation for a better coping and outcome.

¹⁹ 9, Saint Faustina, “Divine Mercy in My Soul – Diary of Saint Faustina,” # 1215, p 437-438.

²⁰ 5, KJV, JOHN 3:16.

XVII. REFERENCES

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