



# Pastoral Letter

My Dear Little Flower,

Our pilgrimage and journey in *Consoling the Heart of Jesus* this summer brings us a concept close to the heart of the Divine Mercy: Redemptive Suffering. The sufferings we endure as Christians have a value that surpasses our thought process or imagination - precisely because our suffering can be united to the suffering of our Lord!

Everyone suffers; but not everyone knows the wisdom behind their suffering. The concept of participating in the redemptive suffering of Christ is rooted in our faith and Christian theology. It suggests that believers can unite their own sufferings with the sacrificial act of Jesus on the cross, finding meaning and purpose in their own pain. This participation deepens one's relationship with God, consoles the heart of Jesus, shares in Christ's mission of redemption, and offers intercession for others.

In his encyclical "Salvifici Doloris" (February 11, 1984), St John Paul II reflects on the mystery of human suffering and its relationship to the redemptive work of Christ. He acknowledges that suffering is a universal experience and seeks to provide a framework for understanding its meaning from a Christian perspective. St John Paul II emphasized that Jesus' suffering and death on the cross were not devoid of meaning but rather a salvific act that brought about redemption for all of us. Jesus transformed the experience of pain and made it an instrument of salvation! As believers we can find purpose, unite our suffering with Christ's, and contribute to the salvation of the world. Suffering, because of Jesus Christ, can now become an occasion for personal growth, and to bring about spiritual transformation to all. Suffering, when embraced in union with Christ, can become redemptive and contribute to the healing of the world!

On our pilgrimage, *Consoling the Heart of Jesus*, we learn about our fears - and one of the greatest fear of all is the fear of suffering. In consoling Jesus through his own suffering, we in turn find ourselves in contact with the pain and brokenness of all human persons.

Your pilgrim priest,  
Fr. JC Merino