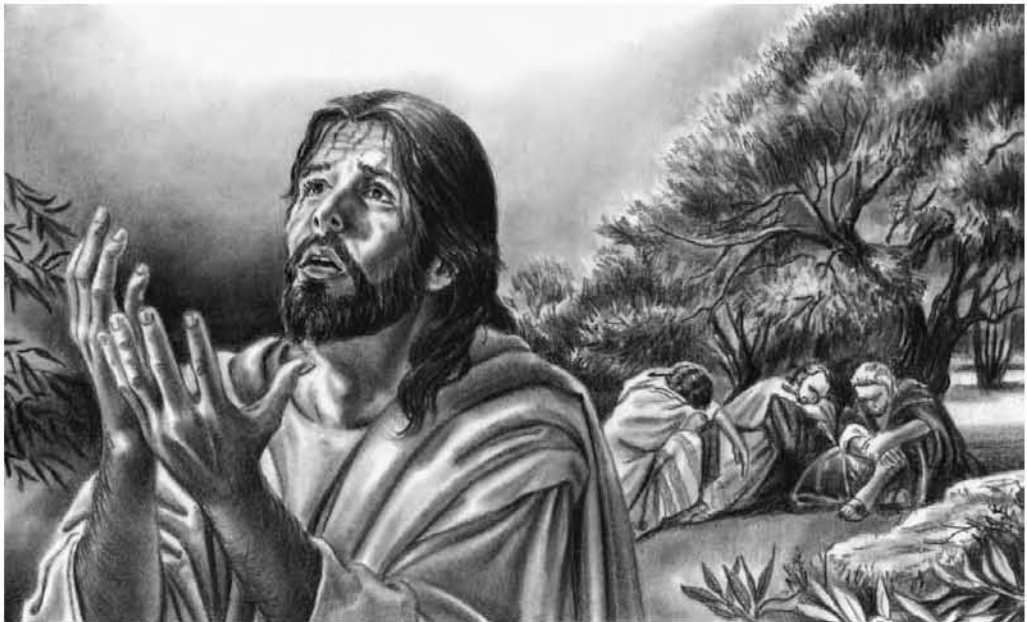


## *The Passion of Our Lord: The Agony on Mount Olivet*

“Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, ‘Sit here, while I go yonder and pray.’ And taking with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, he began to be sorrowful and troubled. Then he said to them, ‘My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch with me.’

“And going a little farther, he fell on his face and prayed, ‘My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.’

#J2-322



“And he came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, ‘So, could you not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.’

“Again, for the second time, he went away and prayed, ‘My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, thy will be done.’ And again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. So, leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words.

“Then he came to the disciples and said to them, ‘Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going; see, my betrayer is at hand’” (Matthew 26:36-46).

**Q. 88. What did the agony and prayer in the garden express?**

The agony and prayer of Jesus in the Garden of the Mount of Olives expressed His desire to do His Father's will at all costs. "Yet not what I will, but what thou wilt" (Mark 14:36).

It also expressed all the spiritual torment Jesus experienced for our sake, as He placed Himself fully in the Father's hands. The torment He experienced due to mankind's rejection of Him caused Him unimaginable pain.

**Sacred Scripture**

He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world knew him not. He came to his own home, and his own people received him not. *John 1:10-11*

**Catechism of the Catholic Church**

**612** The cup of the New Covenant, which Jesus anticipated when he offered himself at the Last Supper, is afterwards accepted by him from his Father's hands in his agony in the garden at Gethsemani,<sup>1</sup> making himself "obedient unto death."<sup>2</sup> Jesus prays: "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me...."<sup>3</sup> Thus he expresses the horror that death represented for his human nature. Like ours, his human nature is destined for eternal life; but unlike ours, it is perfectly exempt from sin, the cause of death.<sup>3</sup> Above all, his human nature has been assumed by the divine person of the "Author of life," the "Living One."<sup>4</sup> By accepting in his human will that the Father's will be done, he accepts his death as redemptive, for "he himself bore our sins in his body on the tree."<sup>5</sup>

#R3\_1-3

**Q. 89. Why were the sufferings Christ bore for us so severe?**

The sufferings Christ bore for us were extremely severe, in large measure, because of our rejection of His infinite love for us.

*For commentaries on each question with Cardinal Arinze, Sr. John Vianney and Fr. Straub (in Spanish), see Appendix E.*

**Sacred Scripture**

Q. 88. Paragraphs 539, 555, 607.  
Q. 89. Is 53:7-12; Heb 12:3.

**Catechism of the Catholic Church**

Q. 89. Paragraphs 312, 572, 766.

***Sacred Scripture***

In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the expiation for our sins. *1 John 4:10*

Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that made us whole, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. *Isaiah 53:4-6*

#R3\_5-20

***Catechism of the Catholic Church***

**1851** It is precisely in the Passion, when the mercy of Christ is about to vanquish it, that sin most clearly manifests its violence and its many forms: unbelief, murderous hatred, shunning and mockery by the leaders and the people, Pilate's cowardice and the cruelty of the soldiers, Judas' betrayal—so bitter to Jesus, Peter's denial and the disciples' flight. However, at the very hour of darkness, the hour of the prince of this world,<sup>1</sup> the sacrifice of Christ secretly becomes the source from which the forgiveness of our sins will pour forth inexhaustibly.

***Vatican Council II***

The Church always held and continues to hold that Christ out of infinite love freely underwent suffering and death because of the sins of all men, so that all might attain salvation. It is the duty of the Church, therefore, in her preaching to proclaim the cross of Christ as the sign of God's universal love and the source of all grace. *Non-Christian Religions, 4*

***Doctrine • Moral • Worship Exercise*** (see Appendix B for answer key)

1. Jesus prayed in the Garden at the beginning of His Passion. What did He pray for?
2. Recall the last time that you risked hardship or persecution to do God's will.
3. Think of situations in your role as a daughter, son, parent, friend, worker, or citizen in which you encounter challenges in fulfilling God's will. List the things that you can do as a Christian to meet these challenges.

### Chapter Summary Prayer

*Jesus, Your Passion begins. Yours is the suffering of the soul. Fear takes hold of You; fear caused by the certainty and nearness of Your death and by the sufferings which will bring it about. You experience disgust at the thought of the sins for which You are to suffer so much. How terrible are the sins of all men and nations and ages, in all their vileness and malice, as compared with God's supreme authority, infinite goodness, justice, and beauty!*

*Sadness fills the very depths of Your soul—sadness caused by Your knowledge of those who will ultimately reject what You will gain by all Your sacrifices. You foresee that men will neglect Your Church, or misuse it, to their own ruin. All these dreadful pictures rise before You and cut You to Your very heart. You are sorrowful unto death. We humbly beg You to forgive us for our part in this agony of Your soul by committing our many sins.*

*Humble obedience to Your Father and tender love for us made You willing to suffer even the greatest torments. Help us to show that we are grateful for Your generosity by granting us true contrition for our sins and a burning love for You, our best Friend and our God, now and forever. Amen.*

#### Family Wisdom Library: Chapter 23

*See Appendix A for more references.*

**Q. 88. What did the agony and prayer in the garden express?**

*On the Christian Meaning of Human Suffering, John Paul II, sect. 18.*

**Q. 89. Why were the sufferings Christ bore for us so severe?**

*On the Christian Meaning of Human Suffering, John Paul II, sect. 14-19;*

*On the Holy Spirit in the Life of the Church and the World, John Paul II, sect. 31-32, 39.*



### Thought Provokers

*Please see Appendix C for the answers.*

- Q. 88: In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus expressed His natural fear of the tremendous physical and emotional suffering he was about to undergo (cf. Matthew 26:36–46). God the Father willed that Jesus' suffering be so intense in order to make clear how evil sin really is. But the Father also wanted to redeem suffering and turned Jesus' intense torment into a supreme good, for it became, together with His death, the means of our Redemption. But what about our suffering? Does it have any positive value, morally speaking?
- Q. 89: Who among the Christians have demonstrated the greatest love for God and for mankind?