

From the Pastor



I believe that God is the Lord of history. Nothing is outside of His plans. He is present in, and through, all historical happenings, great or small. A skeptic would definitely argue with my belief, giving me examples of horrible things that, according to their opinion, God should never have allowed to happen.

Every one of us chooses, every single day, whether we are going to utilize our freedom and talents in a way that is in harmony with God's plan for the human family - or not. But even when we make the wrong decision, abusing our freedom and rebelling against the moral law and the teaching of Christ, God is wise and powerful enough to make even that rebellion help His overall plan. One way or another God always turns one tragedy into some future good. God doesn't fight against evil with evil's weapons. He's got His own way that hardly anyone can predict. As the Catechism puts it: "The witness of Scripture is unanimous that the solicitude of divine providence is concrete and immediate; God cares for all, from the least things to the great events of the world and its history." (#303)

There is a priest from Fall River, Massachusetts whose vocation story illustrates this truth eloquently, though on a small scale. As a boy, he was an altar server in his parish. For years he served the Mass every week, without ever thinking about becoming a priest himself. Then one Sunday something happened that changed his life forever. He was one of the altar servers that day, and he was kneeling at the altar during the Eucharistic prayer. That day, the visiting priest was very distracted during the Mass. He rushed through the prayer so quickly and sloppily that you could barely understand what he was saying. During the consecration of the bread and wine, he rushed through the elevation and the genuflection as if it had no meaning at all. He didn't hold the Eucharist carefully or reverentially, but just went through the motions of the Mass as if he were emptying a bag of groceries. Watching this celebration of the Mass, the young boy became angry. He thought to himself: "This is our Lord Jesus Christ, and this is the most sacred moment of the whole week, and this priest doesn't even seem to care!" It was his very next thought that became the beginning of his own priesthood. He found himself saying in his own heart, "I want to become a priest just so I can treat Jesus in the Eucharist the way he should be treated, with honor, love, and respect."

Certainly God didn't want that priest to celebrate Mass sloppily and carelessly that morning. And yet, God's Providence is so wise and powerful that he brought something wonderful out of something shameful. God never causes our pain. People and the broken world do. If we suffer, we just need to be patient, pray, and soon, if we also pay attention, will see all the good coming out of it. All we need is to trust in God and in His loving providence.

+ Father Roger