



## Your tears are precious to God

### Our Lady of Sorrows

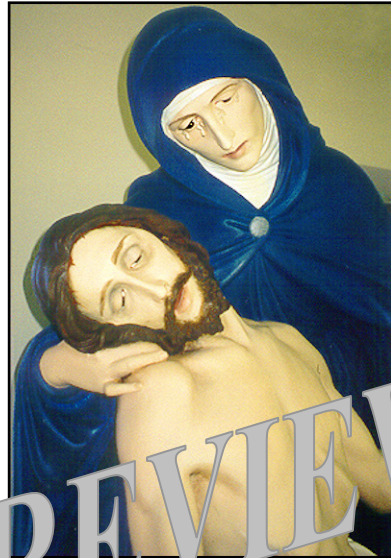
Read John 19:25-27

Tears that are cried during prayer are very valuable, like droplets of diamonds. There's nothing wrong with getting emotional and pouring our sorrows upon God. When your heart is heavy with grief over any loss, any worry, or any hurt, Jesus expects you to share the burden with him. Give yourself permission to really let it all out, from deep within. God does not throw these diamonds away; he cherishes them. He cries with you.

If tears were not prayer-diamonds, why would our Blessed Mother cry in heaven? Why would she be Our Lady of Sorrows? Isn't heaven supposed to be a place of joy, where there is no more sorrow? Yet, she cries because of sin in the world. She cries for you when you turn away from her Son. She cries when someone sins against you. She cries with you when you cry, and so does Jesus.

Crying seems to be a female trait; because of the way we are made biologically, women cry more often than men. Scientists explain that men's hormones channel their grief into anger, and yet Jesus — fully a man — cried for others when he saw them weeping over the death of Lazarus, and he cried for Jerusalem when he foresaw its destruction, and he cried for himself when he faced crucifixion.

God appreciates our tearful prayers, because they mean we're being honest with him and with ourselves. Such prayers come from a passion deep within. Not only are they offerings of grief, like precious diamonds for God, but they are also an act of surrender. We have reached the end of our ability to be strong, happy, and



accepting of life's hardships. In that humble surrender, God has room to move in and comfort us and give us his own strength to continue onward.

Have you ever felt the hug of God? One of the scriptural names for the Holy Spirit is the Comforter, but how can we feel the embrace of a God who's invisible and intangible? Often our tears come from being unable to feel his touch when we need it most. So, we have to look for the various ways that he makes himself known to us. Throughout the day, Jesus is at our side doing little and large favors for us. Usually, however, we let our pain distract us from noticing his gifts.

In John 19:25-27, the comforting embrace of God is made tangible between Mary and the disciple John. While he grieved over the suffering and loss of his dearest friend, she grieved with a heart-break that only a mother can know. And Jesus, in the midst of his own pain, gave the gift of comfort to his mother and friend by giving them both to each other.

It is through community — the gift of each other — that we find comfort. There is no greater pain than suffering alone. God does not want you to suffer alone, ever. He's providing you with friends who will give you his embrace, just like he did for Mary and John. If you don't know who these comfort-companions are, look closer, look in new directions; they are already there for you.