



# Boston Catholic Journal



NIHIL NISI IESUM

Dedicated to Mary, Mother of God

Salus Animarum Suprema Lex Esto (Canon Law 175)

The Salvation of Souls is the Supreme Law in the Church

## Fatal Kisses and Final Whispers:



## To One Contemplating Suicide

Part II

**Many of us at some point in life have seriously contemplated or even attempted suicide.**

Most often this occurs when love has failed. Our love — and being loved — invests us with a sense of worth, value, beauty — in many ways it revealed to us the necessity, the immense value of our being, at least to the beloved who, in their love for us, gave us tangible meaning. We are *told* that we are loved. We are *told* that we are needed — even necessary to them, at least in the way of their happiness. This confers a tremendous sense of value upon us. Whatever the world may think of us, however little it may esteem us ... we have value and beauty in the eyes of the beloved! We need nothing more. Our life becomes, in a sense, complete because it becomes meaningful and valuable.

Love is life. Is not God Himself Love? Is He Himself not Life? Take away love and you take away life. It is a simple, if sometimes brutal equation.

One *can* be alive but experience nothing of life; in which case we live posthumously: life itself, seemingly, had been interred when love had been buried, but in a paradox we cannot grasp, we yet live on — exsanguinated, a pallid and perfunctory semblance of something that once was and is no more. We lose our

authenticity, our sense of being real because the most vital part of that reality — being loved — has been taken from us ... buried and forgotten by all ... but us.

We stand endlessly at the grave mourning the life we lost ... and it was our own.

We are both mourner and the mourned. The living and the dead. What was and is no more.

Is it any wonder that the world spins about us senselessly, without meaning, purpose, the possibility of fulfillment (“of what?”, we ask).

The same love that gave us life is the love that now slays us. Bringing us life, in leaving it left us with death.

We begin to understand the tremendous responsibility inherent in loving; that love, because it is life, will also and equally be the harbinger of death. Instinctively we recognize the fatality, the mortality, involved in loving ... even as it brings life and meaning, purpose and value.

What it can invest us with, we realize, it can also deprive us of. We are vulnerable before it. In embracing it we as surely embrace death *because* we have embraced life. Despite our best efforts we remain deeply aware of final things and the inevitable, ineluctable, end of all things, whether we will it or not.

It is beyond us; once we have embraced it we have embraced the potential of our extinction through it.

How simple it would be to say that we suffer because we have loved neither wisely nor well.

What lover loves wisely? Can we mete out love that is susceptible of measure, such that it suffices to have been measured well?

Who measures love is not worthy of it.

## **The Call to Acceptance**

Clearly, then no one allows love to go uncontended. We strive, beg, plead to keep it, for it is keeping life itself. Unwilling to accept the death of love, three responses are open to us:

- We can live in the past. It is partly true, for it had been; but it is far more true that it is no more.
- We can expunge the past by joining our life to the love that is no more, and thus bury both, the mourner and the mourned, make the living like unto the

dead, for what is dead no longer knows our pain.

- We can turn to God ... and make of our suffering something good, even holy.

Not prepared to moved beyond ourselves and our confinement to a past that would keep us as lifeless as the dead love we grieve, we cease to *be*, choosing to *have been*, instead; *to have been* loved, happy, valued, wanted, needed. It is a consolation as shallow as the grave into which our love had been thrown.

Unable to destroy *our* love, we propose to destroy ourselves.

The two are inseparable ... *or are they?*

## **The Metamorphosis**

A metamorphosis begins. We had been one with the beloved, but the beloved is one with us no more. We are still invested in them, even as they have divested themselves of us. Soon our loss of love acquires a greater scourge still: it begins to *share* in the contempt of the beloved for us. We see ourselves as unlovable, for they had deemed us so — and we had become so much at one with them in our love, as to even now share in their own contempt for us.

Ever seeing the world through the eyes of the beloved, we behold ourselves as we imagine them to behold us. Unworthy. Without value. Unneeded. Unnecessary. Elsewise would they have left? And so we heap ignominy on our pain. Guilt, regret, confusion, blame, all come cascading down upon us ... and we wither beneath the burden of shame, collapse under the onus of two-fold pain: the loss of love and the loathing of the self that somehow survived the loss of life that went with the loss of love. If we are fortunate, this will culminate in either a burgeoning anger or the humility of acceptance.

If we are not, it may culminate in our own death, and by our own hand. This must never be.

## **Holy Indignation**

There are two paths open to you: either despair or indignation.

*Despair* concurs with the assessment of the erstwhile beloved ... that has become your own: you are worthless.

Holy indignation categorically disagrees.

God created you good and He created you for a reason. Your deepest instincts tell you this. Listen to them! They were given you by God, as surely as He had given you aversion to pain. Perhaps you had been loved before. ***Most assuredly you will be loved again and by another. Why? You are intrinsically loveable.*** Were you not you would never have been loved, and even were you never loved by man, by woman, you have ever been loved by God, by His Holy Mother, by the Angels and the Saints. This is no small love. You need only look at a Crucifix to realize just how much you are loved by at least One ... and all who are gathered in Him.

So, holy indignation ensues: you contend in your heart against the heart of who loves you no more. Against the cruel pronouncement, "you are not worthy", you reply in mighty indignation — the indignation that comes from a son or daughter of God Himself — “I ***am*** worthy!” This is not just your pronouncement, ***it is God’s.***

You begin to see that, whatever the cause of the loss of that love, it is not a loss of yourself, of your dignity, of your worth. It does not diminish your value. It cannot, for your value is not radicated in one person only, no matter how much you love them and would that you were loved by them. One has ceased to love you. Have all else? And were all others to cease loving you, still you would be unspeakably

loved by God Himself, and it is a love before which all other loves pale — as one day you will see. But not now. Not this day. Not here.

If still you wish to linger on the lie of despair, if still the bouquet of death is fragrant to you and not fraught with corruption, take comfort in knowing it awaits you yet ... but not in the manner, nor at the hour, of your own choosing. Your life was not yours to give. It is not yours to take. Life is conferred by God for a purpose that may now, at the moment, be utterly opaque to you — but this is certain: it is inexorably bound up with the lives of others, those you know and those whom will come to know. The warp and weave of this multiplicitous fabric of life is a golden skein of many crossings that you cannot now begin to grasp, and to what extent you will never comprehend in this life. It is too vast — and you are literally a *vital* part of it.

Give to God what is His ... your very life! Do not throw it under the feet of false lovers who will trample it remorselessly, and with what astounding resolution! It would leave you breathless. God Alone is the absolutely faithful Lover of your life and your being — Him from Whom it comes and to whence it goes. You are His far more than ever you were another's.



Do not squander your life on promiscuous lies that would seduce you to believe that you are anything less.

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