

The month of September is dedicated to Our Lady of Sorrows, the patron of our parish community in Snoqualmie. In St. Alphonsus Ligouri's book "[The Glories of Mary](#)," he has a long reflection upon the sufferings of our Mother, her Seven Sorrows, and the ways in which she shared in the Passion of her son Jesus.

"Martyrs sacrificed their own life. Mary sacrificed her Son's life, which she loved more than her own. Seeing her Son's suffering brought her more torment than suffering the pain herself. How much any mother suffers to see her children in pain. Augustine wrote about the woman in Macabees who saw her seven sons killed. 'She endured in her soul what they endured in their bodies.' Mary suffered the scourging, the thorns and the nails. All these sufferings entered her heart. 'The heart of Mary became a mirror which faithfully reflected all that Jesus suffered.' (St. Lawrence Justinian) 'The scattered wounds of Jesus were united in her heart.' 'O Lady, where did you stand? Was it at the foot of the cross or were you crucified on the cross with you Son?' (St. Bonaventure)"



Sorrows are real. Not just for Mary, but for us all. And it is important to remember that we are not alone in them. We have Jesus Christ – God who shared in our humanity, and who ascended the Cross, so that we might not be alone there, and that the cross might not be the end of the story. I recently was talking with someone about the sufferings in her life, and the challenge of seeing the Cross so often in Catholic Churches. Why can't we have happier images of Jesus? While yes, it is important to see and love the whole of his life, and see Christ in the midst of the mundane and our own joys, the truth is it's in the midst of our sorrows that we are tried the most, and experience the greatest temptation to reject him and his love. It is there where we most acutely experience the need for salvation. Look for Jesus in the midst of your suffering, and if you are having difficulty finding him, hold onto a Crucifix, that you may not lose hope.

In our sorrows, we have our Blessed Mother, as well, given to us by our Lord. She knows and understands. As Ligouri reflected, her martyrdom lasted 33 years as she carried with her the entire time the suffering of what was to come. We can find in her a kindred spirit, and ask that she console us. And thankfully, hopefully, we have the gift of one another, too, for not even Jesus could carry his cross alone. Do not rob yourself of this gift of God in your life in the midst of your trials. During this coming month dedicated to Our Lady of Sorrows, may we all find in her the strength to persevere in the midst of our own.

While the feast is September 15th, we will be celebrating at Our Lady of Sorrows Parish on September 13th. After the 1 PM Mass, we will have our International Festival, and everyone is welcome to come, and consider bringing a dish for the potluck from (one of) your own culture(s). It will be a day of community, games, music and fun as we celebrate the good, deepen bonds, and call to mind the mother of us all.