

**LINCOLN'S PROCLAMATION** Abraham Lincoln wrote an address to the nation during the Civil War that was at least as important as the Gettysburg Address. It was his proclamation for a national fast-day, by which he did designate and set apart Thursday the 30th day of April, 1863, as a day of national humiliation, fasting and prayer.

Lincoln wrote: "It is the duty of nations as well as of men to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God: to confess their sins and transgressions in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon; and to recognize the sublime truth announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history, that those nations only are blessed whose God is the Lord.

"The awful calamity of civil war which now desolates the land may be but a punishment inflicted upon us for our presumptuous sins, to the needful end of our national reformation as a whole people. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity too proud to pray to the God that made us.

"It behooves us, then, to humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness."

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Sometimes it  
seems like God  
has let you down.

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### *There's a Reason*

For every pain that we must bear,  
For every burden, every care,  
There's a reason.

For every grief that bows the head,  
For every teardrop that is shed,  
There's a reason.

For every hurt, for every plight,  
For every lonely pain-racked night,  
There's a reason.

But if we trust God as we should,  
It all will work out for our good.  
He knows the reason.

"... We know that for those who love  
God all things work together unto  
good..." (Romans VIII 28).

### **Need for Others**

*Time alone does not heal the  
wounds of separation. We need  
others. We rebuild only by open-  
ourselves to life . . . to the risk  
of loving again, knowing that  
those who love the most will  
hurt the most.*

*The pain or loss is a part of  
life . . . but not all life! There  
is always the opportunity for  
more life and more love. Only  
those who have suffered and felt  
the pain can understand that.  
In life, we must choose life  
over and over again. . . and those  
who have suffered must help  
others to choose life and to live  
again!*

—Sr. Paula Ripple

TRouble makes us one with every human being in the world—and unless we touch others, we're out of touch with life. You might as well be dead as stop growing and if you're unwilling to feel, yes, feel, deeply, you're only half alive.

If I had a formula for bypassing trouble, I wouldn't pass it around. Wouldn't be doing anybody a favor. Trouble creates a capacity to handle it. I don't say embrace trouble. That's as bad as treating it as an enemy. But I do say meet it as a friend, for you'll see a lot of it and had better be on speaking terms with it.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

### I ASKED GOD "WHY?"

I asked God "Why did you send this cross,  
The hurt and the pain and the bitter loss?"  
And I found it hard not to complain,  
As I sought for peace of soul again.  
I asked God "Why did you destine me  
For such a special misery?"  
And it seemed somehow that I heard Him say,  
"Man does not walk an easy way.

We experience God's  
power only when we  
give up our pride  
and face our utter  
neediness.