

# REFLECTION

BLD NEWARK COVENANT COMMUNITY

## THE FRUIT OF DISCIPLINE

*“Endure your trials as “discipline”; God treats you as sons. For what “son” is there whom his father does not discipline?...we have had our earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them. Should we not (then) submit all the more to the Father of spirits and live? They disciplined us for a short time as seemed right to them, but he does so for our benefit, in order that we may share his holiness. At the time, all discipline seems a cause not for joy but for pain, yet later it brings the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who are trained by it.” Hebrew 12:7-11*

Why will God let people suffer hardship to achieve discipline? When I recall the hardships in my life – my spouse’s infidelity, my child’s rebellion, my stresses at work, and my friend’s betrayal- they also reminded me of the pain, humiliation, frustration, anger and desire for revenge that I felt in my heart.

I questioned our Heavenly Father, “Why me? Have I not been faithful through the years? Have I not diligently practiced my faith through daily prayers, communions, retreats, and by observing the holy days of obligations? Have I not been kind by giving alms to the needy and my time and talent to charitable causes? Do I not deserve Your love and graces? Why am I being punished and my spirit crushed?” How much more should I submit to the Father of my spirit and live! (Heb 12:9).

Despite the questioning, I did not lose faith but moved forward; I trusted God that in those moments of sorrow, He molded my spirit to remain steadfast. I surrendered my will to Him. I accepted my mistakes and admitted that I was not consistent in practicing my faith and showing my love for Him. I distanced myself from Him. My work became my priority. I became selfish and indulged in the comfort of material things.

After reconciling with God, I went back to my daily prayers. I gave up lunch as penance and attended daily mass. When the tears came down, I offered my pain at the foot of the cross. When I felt depressed, I prayed my Novenas to the Blessed Mother. When I was overcome by hatred, I meditated on the sorrowful mysteries and imagined how Jesus must have felt being rejected, abandoned, and nailed to the cross; yet he asked forgiveness on our behalf.

It took years before I realized that God was training me through my hardships so I could see my mistakes and improve myself.