

Hewetson, D. (1992). *Why does a good God allow suffering?* (pp.108-109) Albatross books: NSW.

HENRI NOUWEN, the contemporary writer on spirituality, in this prayer from his book, *A Cry for Mercy*, shows how in the long run our sufferings are entirely personal. If we seek answers from God, we will inevitably be drawn into prayer:

O Lord, your world – the world you loved so much that you wanted to become part of it and experience it to the fullest – is in pain. Small pains and great pains: the pain of my little niece Frederique, who is in the hospital recuperating from surgery on her face; the pain of my father, who travels for the first time without mother and misses her presence deeply; the pain of a monk who feels lonely; the pain of the students who cannot find work ...

But also the pains of the Indians of Mato Grosso who are oppressed, and the pains of the bishop, priests and sisters who try to be of help; the pains of the many men and women who see the arms race increasing around them and feel discouraged in their attempts to stop it; the pains of the prisoners, the hungry and the many people who seem happy and content, but who feel ripped apart by inner turmoil, guilt feelings, shame, self-doubt and an inability to overcome their own restlessness.

It is your world, O Lord, that is in pain. You are a compassionate God. You came to share our pains. Please give your people hope, courage, strength and faith. Let us not be destroyed by the powers of evil which surround us, pervade us and often inhabit us. Drive from us these evil powers and show us the way to you, who are light, life, truth, goodness and, above all, Love.

*Amen.*