



**Focus Text: Jeremiah 8:18-9:1**

For the hurt of my poor people I am hurt, I mourn, and dismay has taken hold of me. Is there no balm in Gilead?

**Pastoral Reflection by Dr. Warren Kinghorn, Psychiatrist, Graduate Student, Duke Divinity School; member, Presbyterian Church (USA)**

The biblical writers were, indeed, no strangers to the most painful kinds of suffering: they experienced it, they gave voice to it and often denounced oppressive systems which caused it, and they witnessed to a God who could hear their most heartfelt cries and still remain their God.

**Personal Vignette by Rev. Sally Harbold, Associate Rector, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Cary**

I feel blessed to be someone with whom people like to sit and talk. It is especially fitting since I am a priest, and sometimes I find that people really want to talk with a 'spiritual leader'. About four years ago I found it interesting that there were three women church members coming to talk with me who each had a family member being treated for bipolar disorder. As I listened to their stories I began to sense that it might be a good thing for them to meet one another. I had a dream that they might be of help to one another.

**Key Fact**

An estimated 26.2 percent of Americans ages 18 and older — about one in four adults — suffer from a diagnosable mental disorder in a given year.

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