

## Faith of Our Fathers

[A WEEKLY INSTRUCTION FOR YOUNG AND OLD.]

Third Article: Sanctifying Grace.

10. The doctrine concerning sanctifying grace may be reduced to four questions—(1) What is sanctifying grace? (2) What are its effects? (3) How may it be acquired or lost? (4) By what signs can its presence be recognised in the soul?

(1) Definition.—Sanctifying grace is a supernatural gift which, dwelling in our souls, renders us just, holy, agreeable to God, and capable of meriting eternal life. This divine gift is a quality, an abiding influence divinely diffused in the soul, united to it and inherent to it as life is to the body that it animates. This grace renders man just and holy in the eyes of God, as his corporal life constitutes him a living being in the eyes of man.

Sanctifying grace, commonly designated in Scripture by the word life, is in reality the supernatural life of the soul; a real life like that of the body, but invisible and latent like the life hidden in a seed. It is also called light, seed, pledge, seal, or mark of the Holy Spirit, unction, fountain, charity.

Sanctifying grace is called charity, because it is inseparable from charity, as the sun is from its own light.

Other virtues besides charity always accompany sanctifying grace; for, together with it, the three theological virtues, the cardinal and other moral virtues, as well as the gifts of the Holy Ghost, are all diffused in the soul.

(2) Effects of sanctifying grace.—(1) It makes us innocent by effacing sin from our souls. Grace casts out sin, as light dispels darkness, as a resurrection to life chases away death. (2) It renders us just, holy, and the friends of God. The soul adorned by grace is beloved by God with an ineffable love; the Blessed Trinity takes possession of it and dwells therein. (3) It makes us partakers of the divine nature, and as like unto God as the creature can be to the Creator here below. (4) It enables us to bring forth the works of heaven, works that merit eternal life. (5) It makes us become children of God by adoption, heirs of God and co-heirs with Jesus Christ.

(3) Sanctifying grace may be acquired, (1) by baptism and the other Sacraments received with due dispositions; (2) by an act of perfect charity.

It is lost by mortal sin. That grave violation of the law of God which we call mortal sin is like a deep wound that destroys the life of grace in the soul, and makes it appear in the eyes of God like a hideous corpse impressed with the likeness of the devil.

It is preserved by the faithful observance of the law of God, by the avoidance of mortal sin.

It is augmented and increased by prayer, the Sacraments, and all good works. It is capable of continual increase during this life: "The path of the just, as a shining light, goeth forwards, and increaseth even to perfect day" (Prov. iv. 18).

(4) By what signs can its presence be recognised in the soul?—Sanctifying grace, being an entirely spiritual and invisible gift, a divine treasure concealed in man as in a vessel of clay, is not made evidently manifest, as life is in a living body, or as light in crystal. At the same time, however, there are signs by which we may have a moral assurance of being in the grace of God, namely:

(1) If we love to think of God. "Where thy treasure is, there is thy heart also" (St. Matt. vi. 21).

(2) If we have a love for the word of God, for His worship, and for holy things. "He that is of God heareth the words of God" (John viii. 47).

(3) If we are faithful in observing the commandments of God. "He that hath My commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me" (John xiv. 21).

(4) If we have a sincere love for our neighbor, and practise the works of mercy towards the poor. "By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love one for another" (John xiii. 35).

(5) If we have zeal for souls, and an esteem and appreciation of spiritual and imperishable things, and if we love whatever relates to God and to eternal things, and if we love whatever relates to God and to eternal life. "If you be risen with Christ, seek the things that are above, not the things that are upon the earth" (Coloss. iii. 1, 2).

(6) If we venerate the Church and her ministers in the spirit of faith and love "I am the Good Shepherd; and I know Mine, and Mine know Me" (John x. 14).

(7) Lastly, if we have within ourselves the testimony of a good conscience. "If our heart do not reprehend us, we have confidence towards God" (1 John iii. 21).

"For the Spirit Himself giveth testimony to our spirit, that we are the sons of God" (Rom. viii. 16).

## The Pope's Appeal for Russia

The Press of all colors has saluted with expressions of admiration and consent the noble action of Benedict XV. in favor of the Russian people decimated by famine and disease (says the London *Catholic Times*, for August 27). The favorable impression produced on the public by the letter of the Holy Father has had the same effect in diplomatic and political circles. Several Ministers and Ambassadors have been trying to outdo one another in praise of the Pontifical initiative. All the diplomats accredited to the Holy See have had from the Cardinal Secretary of State official communication of the Papal document and have been invited to transmit it to their respective Governments. The Pontifical representatives abroad have also been informed and have been asked to bring it to the notice of their respective Governments to which they are accredited. The Apostolic Nuncio at Paris, Mgr. Cerretti, has communicated it not only to the French Government, but also to the Supreme Interallied Council, which, by a happy coincidence, was assembled these days in Paris. As the letter of Benedict XV. must not be considered a pure and simple diplomatic document, but a universal invitation in a work of most noble charity, so his participation will not be restricted solely to the Governments with which the Holy See maintains formal diplomatic relations, but will be extended to all, and especially to those who are in a condition to be able to co-operate more easily in the initiative promoted by the Pope. These communications will be made by means of the Apostolic Delegates where they exist, or through other channels. Meanwhile, the representatives of the Holy See have received instructions to put themselves in relation with the various committees which have been formed in various centres to bring help to the Russian people. At the Vatican arrive every day numerous letters and telegrams applauding the Pope's action, often accompanied by offers of collaboration. The International Red Cross of Geneva has asked the Holy See to join in a reunion of the representatives of the committees of the Red Cross. The Holy Father has willingly accepted the invitation and has appointed as his representative Mgr. Maglione, Apostolic Nuncio in Switzerland.

If a man does not exercise his arm, he develops no biceps muscle; and if a man does not exercise his soul he acquires no muscle in his soul—no strength of character, no vigor of moral fibre nor beauty of spiritual growth.

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