



PERFECTED IN GRACE:

Part 5: At the Service of Communion

LENTEN REFLECTION FOR THE TASTE PROGRAM – MAR 14TH, 2024

Opening Prayer

2

For as in one body we have many parts, and all the parts do not have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ and individually parts of one another. Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us exercise them: if prophecy, in proportion to the faith; if ministry, in ministering; if one is a teacher, in teaching; if one exhorts, in exhortation; if one contributes, in generosity; if one is over others, with diligence; if one does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. (Romans 12:4-8)

Perfected in Grace Series

3

- ▶ *Feb 15th - The Lord is With You*
- ▶ *Feb 22nd – Those in whom the Spirit Dwells*
- ▶ *Feb 29th – Life in Christ; ~~Life in the Spirit~~*
- ▶ *March 7th - Life in the Spirit*
- ▶ ***March 14th - At the Service of Communion***
- ▶ *March 21st – The Source and Summit of Christian Life*

Life in the Spirit

4

- ▶ *Short Review*
- ▶ Charismatic Gifts
- ▶ Sacraments of Service
- ▶ *Prayer, Fasting, and Almsgiving.*
- ▶ *A look at next week*
- ▶ *Questions*

This adornment of the soul,
clothing it in beauty,
rendering it an object of His
delight and love

Begins in Baptism

**Baptism begins
Theosis and
incorporates us into
the Body of Christ**



The Life of Virtue: Cooperation with the Holy Spirit

- ▶ The gifts of the Spirit are bound together in love so that whoever has [the theological virtue of] love has all the Gifts of the Spirit. **If you do not have love, then the gifts of the Spirit will lie dormant in your soul.** (*Suma* I, II, 68, 5)
- ▶ the practice of a life of virtue is the key that unlocks the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. (*Suma* I, II, 65, 3)

Partakers of the Divine Nature

7

His divine power has **granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness**, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, that through these you may escape from the corruption that is in the world because of passion, and **become partakers of the divine nature**. (2 Pt 1:3-4)

From Faith to Love

8

For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your **faith** with **virtue**, **virtue** with **knowledge**, **knowledge** with **self-control**, **self-control** with **endurance**, **endurance** with **devotion**, **devotion** with **mutual affection**, **mutual affection** with **love**.

(2 Peter 1:5-7)

Can we be full of grace like Mary?

9

- ▶ **No:** Although we make it to heaven (God willing) and are filled, perfected, completed in grace, the fullness of my grace is not like the fullness of Mary's grace. My vocation(s), my charism(s), my grace(s) - the being that I am as a finished work - will not be the same as Mary. I will be what God has made me to be.
- ▶ Can we be full of grace like Mary? No; and we won't even be full of grace like each other.

Many Gifts, One Spirit

10

There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit; there are different forms of service but the same Lord; there are different workings but the same God who produces all of them in everyone. To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit. To one is given through the Spirit the expression of wisdom; to another the expression of knowledge according to the same Spirit;

(1 Corinthians 12:4-8)

Many Gifts, One Spirit

11

(continued)

to another faith by the same Spirit; to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit; to another mighty deeds; to another prophecy; to another discernment of spirits; to another varieties of tongues; to another interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit produces all of these, distributing them individually to each person as he wishes.

Gifts at the Service of Others

12

Now you are Christ's body, and individually parts of it. Some people God has designated in the church to be, first, apostles; second, prophets; third, teachers; then, mighty deeds; then, gifts of healing, assistance, administration, and varieties of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work mighty deeds? Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? **Strive eagerly for the greatest spiritual gifts.**

The More Excellent Way

13

But I shall show you a still more excellent way If I speak in human and angelic tongues but do not have love, I am a resounding gong or a clashing cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy and comprehend all mysteries and all knowledge; if I have all faith so as to move mountains but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away everything I own, and if I hand my body over so that I may boast but do not have love, I gain nothing.

(1 Corinthians 12:31b-13:3)



SACRAMENTS AT THE SERVICE OF COMMUNION

Holy Orders and Matrimony

Directed Toward Others

15

Two other sacraments, **Holy Orders** and **Matrimony**, are **directed towards the salvation of others**; if they contribute as well to personal salvation, it is through service to others that they do so. They confer a particular mission in the Church and serve to build up the People of God. (CCC 1534)

Holy Orders

16

Holy Orders is the **sacrament through which the mission entrusted by Christ to his apostles continues to be exercised** in the Church until the end of time: thus it is the sacrament of apostolic ministry. It includes three degrees: episcopate, presbyterate, and diaconate. (CCC 1536)

The One Priesthood of Christ

17

The redemptive sacrifice of Christ is unique, accomplished once for all; yet it is made present in the Eucharistic sacrifice of the Church. The same is true of **the one priesthood of Christ; it is made present through the ministerial priesthood** without diminishing the uniqueness of Christ's priesthood: "Only Christ is the true priest, the others being only his ministers." (Thomas Aquinas)

(CCC 1545)



MATRIMONY

The Marriage Bond

19

Some Pharisees approached him, and tested him, saying, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any cause whatever?” He said in reply, “Have you not read that from the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female’ and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be **joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh**’? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, no human being must separate.” (Mat 19:3-6)

Spouses are Blessed

20

"From a valid marriage arises a bond between the spouses which by its very nature is perpetual and exclusive; furthermore, in a Christian marriage **the spouses are strengthened and, as it were, consecrated for the duties and the dignity of their state by a special sacrament.**"
(CCC 1638)

Images Divine Love

21

The consent by which the spouses mutually give and receive one another is **sealed by God himself**. From their covenant arises "an institution, confirmed by the divine law, . . . even in the eyes of society." The covenant between the spouses is integrated into God's covenant with man: "**Authentic married love is caught up into divine love.**" (CCC 1639)

The Nuptial Relationship Between Christ and the Church

22

Be subordinate to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives should be subordinate to their husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is head of his wife just as Christ is head of the church, he himself the savior of the body. As the church is subordinate to Christ, so wives should be subordinate to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church and handed himself over for her to sanctify her, cleansing her by the bath of water with the word, that he might present to himself the church in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.

The Nuptial Relationship Between Christ and the Church

23

So [also] husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one hates his own flesh but rather nourishes and cherishes it, even as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. “For this reason a man shall leave [his] father and [his] mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” This is a great mystery, but I speak in reference to Christ and the church. In any case, each one of you should love his wife as himself, and the wife should respect her husband.

Imaging the Relationship Between God and His People

24

The LORD God said: It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a **helper** suited to him.
(Genesis 2:18)

ēzer (Hebrew: helper)

The Three Pillars of Lent Powered by Grace!

25

- ▶ **Prayer** – Pray for the grace to serve others.
- ▶ **Almsgiving** – Give of yourself to others.
After all, you are full of charisms whether you know it or not.
- ▶ **Fasting** – Self-mortification at the service of others (cheerfully).

Next time:

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- ▶ **The Source and Summit of Christian Life**
 - ▶ The Eucharist feeds our deification by communicating all that we need to cooperate with Grace.

Questions?