

Time To Take Your Spiritual Temperature?

"I go to confession frequently, receive Communion almost daily, but don't think I'm getting places in a hurry. I confess the same sins over and over again. What's wrong?"

Let's take a look-see. First, keep in mind this--the sacraments are effective of themselves to produce divine life or increase it in your soul. But the amount of this grace received will depend directly upon your dispositions. Generally speaking, there are two principal reasons why your dispositions may not be more productive: Are you neglectful of little things in the service of God? Do you refuse to make the sacrifices He asks of you daily?

Realize what you're after--increasing divine life. Grace is actually the beginning of eternal life. This can be increased or decreased in the degree you are turned toward God and away from sin--any sin. In the state of grace you are already in the state of eternal life; for grace is the seed of glory. Christ said: "He that believeth in Me, hath everlasting life." The life of grace is eternal life begun in you now.

Beg God you will understand the importance of this doctrine. Don't be like the student who was asked by a priest: "How frequently do you correspond with Grace?" To which the student replied: "I don't write to her at all. She didn't answer my last letter."....St. Thomas taught that "the good of grace in one is greater than the good of nature in the whole universe."

How About Your Prayer?

Do you try, honestly try, to pray devoutly, fighting distractions? Check up on the way you say morning and evening prayers, prayers before and after meals, prayers said in time of temptation, the rosary. Do you assist as a "detached spectator" at the great Prayer of the Mass, making little or no effort to participate in the Eucharistic Sacrifice.

Pius XII (Encyclical on the SACRED LITURGY) urges participation in the Sacrifice by the entire congregation. He says, "Reproduce within themselves (yourselves)...that same state of mind which Our Divine Redeemer had when He made His Sacrifice of Himself." In other words, you should "bring humble submission of mind and should offer adoration, honor, praise and thanksgiving to the infinite Majesty of God."...You should deny yourselves "according to the precepts of the Gospel...voluntarily do works of penance...detest and expiate" your sins.

The same Holy Father strongly recommends full participation in the Mass--the reception of Holy Communion. The Council of Trent urgently advised "that at each Mass the faithful present should communicate

not only in spiritual desire, but also by the reception of Sacramental Communion, in order that the fruit of this most holy Sacrifice may more abundantly be theirs."

What sorrow for your sins, what love of honesty, charity, temperance, what willingness for making acts of self-denial do you bring to Mass and Communion? If you receive outside Mass, how well do you prepare? How prayerful is your thanksgiving?

A Mass offered in a spirit of deep faith is far superior to your own personal activity. Through the Mass you unite yourself--your dispositions of hatred for sin, love of virtue--to the redemptive activity of Christ Who re-presents Calvary each morning in your chapel.

Do you squander graces? What about your venial sins? Do you honestly try to overcome those little foxes that destroy the vines? Do you commit deliberate venial sins when the occasions come up? Such as lying, griping confabs, laziness in study, ridiculing others, cowardice in resenting indecent talk because you fear the social disapproval of your friends? Take care.

Prayers: (Ill) sister of Mrs. Pat Mannion--Mrs. Elizabeth O'Brien Metcalf; (operation) friend of Jack Boyd (How). Special Intentions -- 9.