

LIFE WITH FATHER! Begin
your novena for him to-
morrow.

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LIFE WITH CHRIST! Back to
the Sacraments and the Sac-
rifice of the Mass.

Look At Christ.

We hear a lot about stresses and strains, not only in bridge construction but in the construction of personality. There are demands made on the personality by its need for God. Man was made by God. God did not make man idly, on a whim, for no purpose. He made man for union with Himself. Man, therefore, is full of powers intended to unite him with God, powers which must be frustrated if not used for that, and of needs which only union with God can meet.

Many of the stresses that lead to the formation of an "escapism" come from environment. But this primary stress of man's need for God comes from the very center of his soul. The mind needs God as an object of its knowing power, the will needs Him as an object of its loving power, the whole personality hungers for the life and the strength that come only from Him. This hunger, unfed, means starvation to men, whether or not they know what they are hungry for. This hunger the Sacraments are ordained to appease. Sacramental life is the ordered response to this normal spiritual stress.

Man's personal need for God is his primary stress, which is experienced psychologically as something to which a person must aim, as at an end. If we want to see what this Last End is in terms of crystal clarity we can do no better than to look at Christ. For He, and He alone, is what we are called to be.

Before a person creates a work of art there is always some sort of plan or pattern which his work will eventually embody. The contractor first of all will plan his house; the musician will have in his mind a theme for his composition; and engineer will have his blueprint.

The Book of Genesis stresses that man is the work of God. What was the plan, idea, pattern, of man in the mind of God? How did humanity exist in the mind of God?

We know the answer. Of all the ideas in the mind of our Creator, the greatest idea in regard to creation is the idea of the created humanity to be taken by God the Son. The Man that God the Son was to become in the mystery of the Incarnation takes primacy over all other divine ideas of men. All men are at the base of the pyramid; the apex of it is Christ. Through Christ from eternity God thinks of men.

Christ is the Second Person of the Trinity. He is God the Son, possessing in its fullness the Divine Nature. Although God was made man, He was no less God. The humanity which Christ took from Mary His mother is the perfection of humanity. St. Paul tells us He was like to us in all but sin.

From all eternity, the humanity God was to create was always bound up with the Man God the Son was to become. THE PLAN OF MAN was the humanity of Christ. Christ, then, is the model upon which we are made. We are most ourselves when we are most like Him.

What did Christ see as His Last End? To come to His Father in heaven. And as the rule of all His actions here upon earth? To do the will of His Father Who sent Him. The man who follows the pattern for human conduct laid down by Christ is the man who is drawing near to his Final End. He is by adoption and by grace what Christ is by nature. He is now God's adopted son through Christ. He is the man who is in Christ.

(Digested passages from "Neuroses and Sacraments" by Alan Keenan, O.F.M.)

If you were created for union with God, if Christ be the perfect man, the point of reference for character development, deviation from this goal, absolutely by mortal sin, relatively by venial sin, will cause in you a restlessness that only the Sacraments will pacify. Hence, once again, the importance of living in the state of grace and of frequenting the Sacraments.