

**Editor's Note:** To help readers prepare spiritually for Christmas, CFN will be offering periodic meditations during Advent from *Divine Intimacy*, a classic volume by a Carmelite priest and master of the interior life, Fr. Gabriel of St. Mary Magdalen (1893-1953). Each meditation is numbered as it appears in the book, according to its place in the liturgical year. Hence, the following meditation is found in the First Week of Advent (Day 3 of the liturgical year). May these spiritually rich texts be an effective aid for preparing our minds and hearts to receive Our Lord anew at Christmas.

\*\*\*\*\*

### 3. Sanctity and the Plenitude of Grace

**By Fr. Gabriel of St. Mary Magdalen, O.C.D.**

If Jesus came to sanctify all, if it is God's will that "all should be saints," then sanctity cannot consist in extraordinary gifts of nature and grace, which depend solely upon God's liberality.

Sanctity, therefore, must consist in something that all souls of good will, even the simplest and most humble, can attain, sustained by the divine assistance. Sanctity is the perfection of the Christian life. It is the full development in us of the supernatural life, whose beginnings are sanctifying grace, the infused virtues, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Baptism has deposited within us this seed of sanctity, which is grace, a seed capable of blossoming into precious fruits of supernatural and eternal life for the soul which zealously cultivates it.

By elevating us to the supernatural state, grace makes us capable of entering into relations with the Blessed Trinity, that is, capable of knowing and loving God as He is in Himself, as He knows and loves Himself. Grace, therefore, engenders and nourishes a new life of knowledge and love in us, a life which is a participation in the divine life. What could be holier or more sanctifying than these intimate relations with the Blessed Trinity? Such are the lofty heights to which grace raises us.

This supernatural life, proceeding from grace, must permeate our entire human life in such a way that the latter will be supernaturalized in all its activities, in every detail, as well as in its totality. As grace grows and flourishes in our soul, its influence becomes deeper and wider; and when this influence extends effectively to all our actions, directing them solely to God's glory and uniting us wholly to Him by means of charity, then we have reached the fullness of Christian life, sanctity.

Grace is a wholly gratuitous gift bestowed on us by God through the infinite merits of Jesus. He merited it for us by His death on the Cross, and not in a limited measure, but superabundantly. St. John says that He is “full of grace...and of His fullness we all have received, and grace for grace” (John 1:14, 16). Hence, we can all become saints.

This does not mean, however, that we are all called to the same degree and kind of sanctity. Besides those we call the “great” saints, those who had a special mission to accomplish and therefore received singular gifts of nature and grace, there have always been the humble, hidden saints, who were sanctified in obscurity and silence.

Sanctity does not consist in the greatness of the works accomplished or of the gifts received, but in the degree of sanctifying grace and charity to which the soul has attained by faithful correspondence with God’s invitations. I, too, can aspire to this kind of sanctity with no fear of rashness or self-deception.

*Text taken from [Divine Intimacy](#) (Baronius Press, 2015), pp. 8-9.*