

objects or people he has renounced by his vows. But with the layman, there is no vow to seek after perfection. Whatever the calling, or the circumstance of the state of life, every man is bound to the best of his ability to love God and his neighbor fully.

What does it mean to love God?

We know, of course, that God is our Father. Our existence comes from Him. He made us His children when He poured sanctifying grace into our souls at the moment of our Baptism. We can say that we love God, only when it becomes evident to us that our wills are in perfect conformity with His Almighty Will. Let us repeat the important word: PERFECT conformity. We must enthrone God — our loving Father — in the very center of our affection, and at the slightest intimation of His Will, our will should beat in perfect unison. A little child does this in its love for its loving father. Were we to see God, our Father in Heaven, face to face, somewhat as children see their father in this world, our wills would at once become attuned to his in the most wonderfully spontaneous way. But we do not see Him clearly as yet. We do not see Him face to face, not as the little children see their fathers. The result is that the love we should bear God during our time on earth differs in this important respect, at least, from a child's love of its father — that what the child does spontaneously and without reflection, we must do deliberately and by reason of deep reflection. Our love of God is not destined thus always to be labored and deliberate; indeed, even here below it becomes more natural and unstudied as it grows stronger. But, in the main, to love God on earth there is demanded of us a conscious effort to keep our wills attuned to His. And this effort will be demanded in all the activities of our will: its likes and dislikes, its joys and sorrows, its hopes and fears. Hence, not only by obeying God's Commandments, but also by such wonderfully sublime desires as to rejoice with Him in His Infinite and Eternal Happiness, and to grieve over the offenses offered Him by sin, should the will act.

At this point, there is something that is urgently necessary to remember. We simply must, in all cases, exercise good judgement, common sense and a humble acceptance of guidance sought from experienced spiritual directors. The wise and prudent guidance of these pious souls, men and women who have themselves been tried as gold is tried by fire, cannot be emphasized enough. Youthful advisors are usually more familiar with the rules of the book than they are familiar with the practical application of the rules to the warfare the average soul is struggling with. In these days when true and tried priests and spiritual directors are so very few and far between, the use of the telephone would be advisable.

(To be continued in the next issue of the SPECULUM)



Resurrection