

# OF SANCTITY

We cannot speak of Sanctity so long as we place the need for personal comfort – personal convenience – personal contentment – personal pleasure – personal achievement – personal preferences BEFORE the importance of personal penance – personal mortification – personal reparation. It is true and understood that penance, or personal mortification is each a chastisement. It is true and understood that our natural inclinations shy away from chastisement and seek after the gratification of self. It is also true BUT NOT UNDERSTOOD that our Lord said: “If a man would be perfect, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow Me.” Like it or not – there is a cross waiting each day for us to carry, and carry it we must! To carry our cross with love for Christ is sanctity, and sanctity equals perfection; perfection equals sanctity. To carry our cross in hatred of it, or with bad love for it, or bad obedience, or bad charity, would be our damnation, because damnation equals self; self equals damnation. You cannot love self and Christ at the same time. “No man can serve two masters!”

Penance and mortification and reparation are not for monks or nuns alone. The faithful and good lay people (all of them) are obliged to them – as well. We are all sinners. Therefore, we are all obliged to follow the same path to Calvary. Monks and nuns, because of their special calling and their special dedication have been called to carry heavier crosses, and monks and nuns, because of their special calling and their special dedication have been asked for a higher quality of love. But we must all comprehend that because we are still living and breathing, that time is being given to us for repentance and penance and reparation, and this owing to our Divine Lord, Who before offering His Most Holy Sacrifice on the Cross, included us in His memento!!

In truth, we are no longer a mortified race, and our willingness to become mortified is quite perfunctory. How willing are we to mortify our desire for fun and pleasure? How willing are we to mortify our desire for food and drink (and drugs)? How willing are we to mortify our cravings for a soft and cushy life? How willing are we to curb our desire to possess things? How willing are we to mortify our pride or covetousness, or lust, or anger, or envy or sloth? The list is endless.

The labor (and it is a labor) of mortification, or of penance, or of reparation, is more than the mere endurance of tedium. It is not simple inconvenience. The labor is more than a fight against lack of interest. The labor is painful! The labor is enduring! It is meant to be that way, by order from God, Himself! When the Saints write about these things they have little difficulty in convincing us that the martyrdom of the spirit is more crucifying, than the martyrdom of the flesh. Yet – let us not forget – “let him take up his cross daily!” But if we do not have a proper and good love for the cross – IT IS ALL FOR NOTHING!

If Jesus Christ – the Son – was required by His Heavenly Father to undergo the torments of the crucifixion, it would be profound ignorance for us to think that we are – somehow – excused from having to do the same!!!