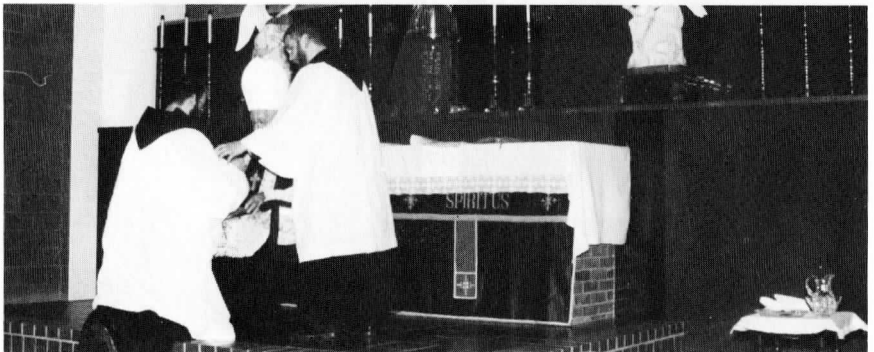


# Of Mortification

The ideal aim of all mortification is to avoid ANY action, thought, word, or deed, which Jesus cannot receive from us and MAKE HIS OWN. Mortification must cause us to move about as Jesus would (and did) move about - especially placing the focus on His private life at home in Nazareth. Mortification is not performed in any morbid sense, nor in a spirit of self-hatred, self destruction or in contempt of the body. It is not a negative thing or negative practice. It is not a foolish frustration or self-suppression. Rather, it is a very positive way of life. The world, and the people under the influence of the world, consider mortification as something quite negative. Mortification is an "assertion" of Jesus - it is an attempt to be exactly as Jesus was rather than a denial of self. The only reason we deny ourselves is to find Him, that He may live in us and that we may be united to Him - BECAUSE OF OUR GREAT LOVE FOR HIM!

The principal way of denying oneself in order to be united to Jesus is by HUMILITY. We insist upon this, despite the fact that corporal and external mortification is often presented as the first stage of the spiritual life. A man can be highly mortified in his body, master of all his passions, ready to defy all human respect, undaunted by suffering or hardship, indefatigable in good works - - of the EXTERNAL SORT - - given to long prayers, be a daily Communicant, faithfully devoted to the Rosary, and withal be as pious as the PHARISEE in the Gospel and, therefore, hateful to God. It would be far, far better to evade mortification altogether saying to God: "How unmortified I am" than to perform the heights of mortification and saying to oneself: "How wonderful I am." Someone once said the famous nuns of the Convent of Port-Royal were "as pure as angels, but as proud as devils!" □



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