



# Priestly People

SERVANTS OF THE PARACLETE

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*“The Holy Spirit dispenses to all, those gifts of love which through Him have been poured into our hearts... The church turns to the Holy Spirit, along the intricate paths of man’s pilgrimage on earth: she implores the joy and consolation that only the Holy Spirit can bring by coming down into people’s inmost hearts: the Church implores the grace of the virtues that merit heavenly glory, implores eternal salvation, to which the Father has eternally predestined human beings, created through love in the image and likeness of the Most Holy Trinity.”*

St. John Paul II – October 22nd  
– Happy Feast Day!

# The Divine Fruits

## Part Eight

# Generosity

**Kindness, as we stated earlier,** is obligingness to the needs of others and from this obligingness springs the Fruit of Generosity, which gives neither because it expects a gift in return, not because there is a duty or obligation to give.

Generosity reaches beyond kindness, for of its very essence generosity seeks to give above and beyond obligation, and finds its reward simply and totally in the joy of giving. This attribute makes generosity the key of joy!

There are three degrees of generosity and all three of them are Fruits of the Holy Spirit.

- The first degree comprises all those things that must be done if we wish to save our souls. It is, in other words, a resolve to do God's will insofar as we must. This is generosity, strange as it may seem, because we are physically free to choose to give or not to give.
- In the second degree of generosity what is undertaken, or continued, comprises all those things that a soul knows God wants of it but which would not deprive it of salvation if it did not do them.

- In the third degree of generosity a soul undertakes to do what it knows will please God but what is not actually prescribed. It does what we might call the "*Divine Wishes*," leading the soul to give to God not only what it has, but all that it is. It induces us to sacrifice to Him our mind, our will, our liberty, our health, our life, our reputation, and leads to a total absorption of ourselves into God.



**You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. 2 Corinthians 9:11 |**

**Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. 2 Corinthians 9:7 |**

**Good will come to those who are generous and lend freely, who conduct their affairs with justice. Psalm 112:5**

# DIVINE GENEROSITY

*John Hardin SJ*

Our goal for this conference is to understand the meaning of generosity as a Fruit of the Holy Spirit. There are, to begin with, four implications to generosity. **First we are not generous until we begin to give.** At the heart of generosity, then is giving. **Second, generosity implies freedom on the part of the one giving.** When a person is generous, he gives with no obligation, no coercion. **Third, generosity implies gratuity, that is, the giver expects no profit in return.** **Fourth, generosity implies going beyond ordinary giving, it carries with it the idea of largess, of giving more than the ordinary.**

How are we to understand this revealed mystery of the “more,” of generosity? It means many things. First, it means that a person who acts with the generosity of the Holy Spirit will be more virtuous than he has to be, absolutely speaking, to avoid the penalty of hell. Second, he will be more self-sacrificing than he is obliged to be to avoid sin, even venial sin. Then he will be more committed to the service of Christ and his neighbor than the generality of Christians are expected to be.

Climbing higher up the ladder of generosity, we come upon two other levels. First, a generous person is more ready to accept suffering which comes unbidden from the hands of God, that is: he accepts more than he would have to accept to satisfy his duty as a Christian.

Finally, the height of generosity is found in an eagerness to choose the cross. This is the apex of generosity and it carries with it the willingness and in fact the desire to become as Christ like as possible. It is exercised for no other reason than to become assimilated to Jesus, Who used His freedom to prefer poverty, humiliation, and suffering, even though He might have redeemed the world without the Cross.

## **The Church tells us that we are all called to the apex of generosity!**

The first step towards this attainment is to know we have been called to this height of sanctity and that God’s grace has been given to us for its accomplishment. The second step toward reaching this goal is to remove the obstacles in our way: to remove our unruly desires and fears, to work against them. The third is to study in prayer the life of Christ. The fourth is to keep Christ’s presence in our minds as much as possible so that He may continually reveal to us His calls to generosity. This intimacy with Christ is absolutely necessary. And the fifth step towards the apex of generosity is to respond to God’s invitations to be generous with spontaneity, with peace, with serenity.

**Such generosity has a great reward not only in Heaven but also on earth, first in spiritual joy, for we shall be as happy as we are generous.**







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