



# Priestly People

SERVANTS OF THE PARACLETE

March 2018 - Vol. 34 No. 3

## Via Coeli Monastery - Jemez Springs New Mexico



*“Because we are set in a semi-contemplative setting, we have the great advantage of accomplishing an apostolic work in retreat. We do not have to leave our retreat to accomplish our work... God brings the wounded padres to us... We are an Inn to which Christ brings his wounded priests”.*

FR. GERALD SP MAXIMS # 49

# The Divine Fruits

## *Part One*

When a soul corresponds faithfully to actual grace, which sets in motion the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, this soul performs acts of virtue, at first imperfectly and with difficulty, then more perfectly and with greater relish. Just as the fruits of a tree, when ripe, lose their sharpness and are pleasant and sweet to the taste; so when acts of the virtues have attained a certain maturity, they are performed with pleasure, and produce a delicious flavor.

These mature acts of virtue, inspired by the Holy Spirit, fill the heart with holy joy and are called **Fruits of the Holy Spirit**.

They may be defined as acts of virtue which reach a certain degree of perfection and fill the soul with holy joy. They are to our souls what the fruit is to the tree, what the flower is to the plant.

These Fruits of the Spirit are not feelings and emotions but facts. We might call them manifestations of the Mind of God in His creation, manifestations of His unlimited and generous love, His essential joy, His deep tranquility, His patient and gentle action and His faithful and cherishing care.

In the last chapter of Revelations (Rev. 22:1) we read of the Tree of Life: "He showed me a river of water of life, clear as crystal. On both sides of the river was the Tree of Life, bearing twelve Fruits": the twelve fruits of the Holy Spirit.

The first three of these Fruits deal with the relationship of the soul with God Himself: **CHARITY** is the love which unites us to God; **JOY** is thanksgiving and consciousness of God's infinite goodness, in which we live and move and **PEACE** is the Fruit whereby we are at rest with God, ourselves and mankind.

The next six Fruits have a relation to our neighbor: **PATIENCE, KINDNESS, GOODNESS, GENEROSITY, GENTLENESS, and FAITHFULNESS**. The final three have a relation to ourselves. They are **MODESTY, SELF CONTROL and CHASTITY**.

Our Lord speaks of these Fruits of the Spirit in the parable of the true vine: "I am the True Vine, you are the branches. Every branch in Me that bears no Fruit will be cut down" (Jn. 15: 5-7). This being the case, it is a matter vital to us all to know whether or not we are bearing the fruits of a Christian life. Therefore, we will now consider how our correspondence to grace and to the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, infused into our soul at Baptism, blossoms forth into Flowers and Fruits on the True Vine the practice of the root virtue of each Fruit.

When, through repeated exercises, these root virtues reach maturity and are performed with agility and promptness, generating sweetness and joy within the soul, they are said to be the Fruits of the Holy Spirit.

St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Galatians (5:22), enumerates these Fruits of the Holy Spirit.

**CHARITY, JOY, PEACE, PATIENCE, KINDNESS, GOODNESS, GENEROSITY, GENTLENESS, FAITHFULNESS, MODESTY, SELF-CONTROL, and CHASTITY.**

# Divine Charity

FR. GERALD SP

The Blood of Christ! How closely one in charity, we should be, seeing that morning by morning the same Blood purples our lips, crimsones our hearts, and purifies our souls. The ramifications of this truth are among the sweetest consolations of the spiritual life. There is no surer sign of spiritual light than unselfish interest in the welfare, spiritual and material of others. The soul that by loving aspiration tends upwards to God has need to balance and support its higher altitude by putting down deeper roots into the soil of our common humanity. I believe this is why the Master designated fraternal charity as a sure sign of His discipleship.

Genuine charity has three characteristics that distinguish it: It is constant, disinterested and universal.

And this is but another way of saying that it must be like the charity of Christ, the Master.

How constant an element was the charity of His Heart in relation to mankind: neither lack of appreciation nor positive malice could change



His friendly attitude and His willingness to help and pardon all. How unselfish and disinterested was His charity that even from the Cross was concerned with securing the welfare of His enemies. How universal was His love that envisioned not alone the men and women of His own land but those of every land, of every century, and planned to envelope all these without exception in the red mantle of His Saving Blood!

To those who have eyes to see, minds to reflect, hearts to beat with throbbing charity of God, to such, life is a wondrous thing, an astounding adventure, a sublime romance: God-given, God-blessed and God-centered.

Therefore, set all of the sails of our soul craft to catch the breezes of Divine Charity: for charity is the unfolding of the rose, it is the fullness of the image of God, it is the mountain you must climb, the valley you must descent, the sea you must transverse, the bridge to Eternity. As Saint John of the Cross has said:

***"AT THE EVENING OF LIFE WE WILL BE JUDGED ON OUR LOVE."***







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