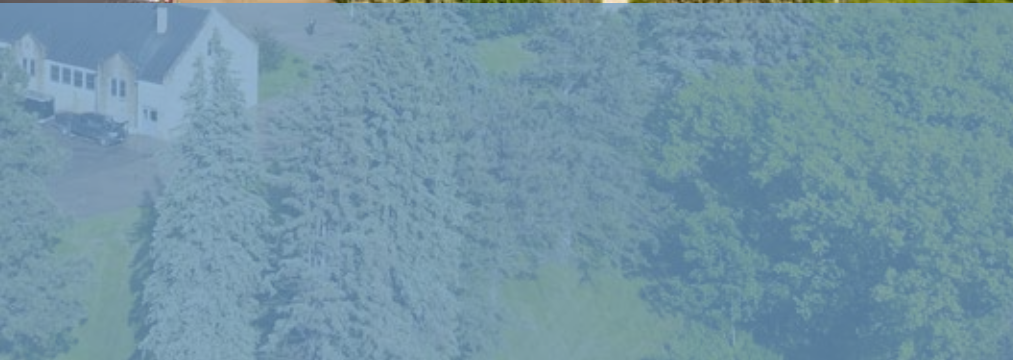




S S P X



Holy
Angels
Novitiate



The devil knows he has lost the soul of the one who perseveres in mental prayer.

—St. Teresa of Avila



Letter from the Rector

Dear Friends and Benefactors,

A short time ago I wrote concerning the ideal way to pray the Holy Mass (see newsletter #10 on our website). To pray well is vitally important for us. Without pray we cannot save our soul. To pray well is a grace a God. We must ask for it. We have a duty as Catholics to communicate with God, with our Savior Jesus Christ. He wants us to speak to Him. He wants us to engage our heart, our will. Not just to think of Him but to speak to him with our heart.

One of the great ways to speak to God is in meditation. Meditation is not just an ideal way to communicated with God, but also a way we can reform ourselves, acquire virtue, conquer our vices, and build our character. Spending twenty or twenty-five minutes a day in mental prayer can and will change your life if it is done properly. But you might say: "But I have been on retreat, and learned something about mental prayer, but did not get much out of it". If this was you, then it is possible that you missed some essential points.

It is quite possible that you began just thinking (considerations) about a mystery of Our Lord and that probably occupied most of your time, when you could actually keep focused... and nothing seemed to improve. Well that is most likely you first mistake. Spending all your time in considerations about the mystery is not properly speaking, praying. Yes, you most likely will get some credit for it but it is not serious prayer. Prayer involves the will, or the heart, not just the intellect. Thus considerations are not the prayer but the agency which moves us to pray. Fr. Rodriguez gives us an example:

"In order to sew we have a need of a needle; yet it is not the needle but the thread which sews; and a man who would spend his day in running a needle without any thread through a piece of cloth, would be doing a very unprofitable and ridiculous work. Yet this is almost what those do, who, when "praying", use considerations and reflect much, without ever applying themselves to make acts of the will [affections] and of charity(love). For considerations should be as it were the needle; it should go before, but only in order to draw after it the thread of love and the affective motions by which our will is united to God." (*Christian Perfection, On Prayer, c. xi.*)

The affections are the heart of mental prayer. "Certain movements of the soul [heart], which arise from the consideration... such as are the acts of all the virtues; of faith, hope, charity, adoration, admiration, praise, thanksgiving, oblation of oneself, grief for one's sins, shame for one's past life, and such like."(Fr. Crasset)

How much time should I spend on considerations? At most, maybe ten percent or less of the time you have to meditate. How much time should I spend on the affections? Ans.: most of the time of your meditation.

Thus we need to be speaking to Our Lord, using our will, to adore, to praise, to love, to thank, to beg for mercy, to manifest our unworthiness, our humility or littleness before His majesty. To show Him empathy at His sufferings, His sorrows, His wounds; these acts of the will are what the spiritual authors call the affections – not the emotions. If you get lost, remember the basics ACTS: Adoration, Contrition, Thanksgiving, and Supplication (ACTS).

So how does mediation reform us? Ans.: Amongst all the acts of mental prayer, resolutions hold the chief place. At the end of meditation, make your resolution for today. Something you must do today. "The principal fruit of mental prayer," says St. Vincent de Paul, "consists in making a good resolution, and a strong one too" Make it very particular. For example to absolutely avoid an occasion of sin; or practice charity toward someone you will see today that you dislike. Meditation, without a resolution, is almost useless. Meditation is a kind of spiritual strategy which has for its object to conquer a vice or to acquire a virtue. To make resolutions without prayer is to attempt to fly without wings. Ask for the grace of prayer. God wants to communicate with us. He wants our affections. To see more on this subject see: *The Ways of Mental Prayer* (Tanbooks.com).

Be sure to read Father Kenneth Dean's excellent article on *The Light of Faith*. We ask your prayers for the repose of the soul of Brother Henry (last stationed in Dickinson, TX.) who died August 13th at the age of 87. We will miss him. See his obituary on the SSPX U.S. District Website: www.sspx.org. We are most grateful for your support and sacrifices.

In the Hearts of Jesus and Mary,

Father Charles J. Ward
Rector

The Light of Faith

By Fr. Kenneth Dean

“The just man lives by faith.” (Rom. 1, 17)

When the virtue of Faith is infused into our soul together with grace at our baptism, everything changes. Yes, everything changes. But how can this be when nothing on the outside changes? We can truly say everything changes with baptism, since *the essence of our very soul* is transformed by the grace of God, and everything in us is affected by the soul which animates us.

Sanctifying grace in the soul is life and light. Before the grace of God comes into the soul, the soul is dark because it is devoid of God’s life. Grace brings with it the life of God; and this is true light. *“In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.”* (St. John 1, 4)

But grace does not come alone into our soul. God pours into the soul, He has adopted by grace, the ability to operate on the divine level. When God shares His divine life with us, He also shares His ability to work divinely with us. This He does by giving us the infused, supernatural virtues. And the first of these is faith.

Faith is also a light. Just as our eye is the light of our body, so faith is the light of our soul. *“The light of thy body is thy eye. If thy eye is sound, thy whole body shall be full of light.”* (St. Matt. 6, 22) St. Augustine and St. Gregory both teach that the eye

which is the light of the body, refers to our intention in whatever we do. If our intention is good, our works will be good. *“We know that all our works are pure and pleasing in the sight of God if they are performed with a single heart. This means that they are performed out of charity and with an intention that is fixed on heaven.”* (St. Augustine) However, to have charity and an intention fixed on heaven are only possible through faith. *“The first thing a Christian needs is faith... Faith unites the soul to God...”* (St. Thomas Aquinas)

St. Luke, in quoting Our Lord, adds the idea that the light of faith shall firstly enlighten the one who possesses it. *“If then thy whole body be full of light, having no part of darkness; the whole shall be full of light; and as a bright lamp, shall enlighten thee.”* (St. Luke 11, 36) Starting within, the light of faith will then go out to others *“Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”* (St. Matt. 5, 14)

The Catholic Faith is a light that has the power to transform the world. However, it starts by transforming our own lives. *“For God... has shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God...”* (II Cor. 4, 6) The light of the knowledge of God is given us through faith that comes with grace. And as was said before, when faith comes into our



soul everything changes. Everything is seen in a whole new light. St. Thomas Aquinas says *“faith is the light of the soul.”* It is a supernatural, spiritual light. Faith gives us the ability to see and understand the spiritual and the supernatural. However, let’s not jump to wrong conclusions here. Faith is not a kind of preternatural gift whereby we can ‘see’ or ‘feel’ the presence of something that can’t normally be seen. No. We’re not talking about sci-fi or the paranormal here. What is supernatural or spiritual is above all nature, not something on nature’s often hazy borders. Faith gives us the ability to discern the working of God in everything, both good and bad events; favorable and unfavorable circumstances; things planned and things that happen “by chance”. Everything is seen as coming from God or allowed by God for some good reason, often known to Him alone.

In the religious life, this vision of faith is essential. For a religious to live at peace, they must see everything as coming from God. Whether it’s the place they are appointed to live; or the superior they have; or the tasks they are assigned to do – to be at peace it all must be understood as coming from the good God,

who works through all things and in all things.

Our faith primarily consists in believing God – who is the first truth. St. Thomas Aquinas says, *“We derive from God knowledge of truth... Accordingly faith makes us adhere to God, as the source from which we derive the knowledge of truth, since we believe that which God tells us is true.”* *“Faith adheres to all the articles of faith through one means; that is, on account of the First Truth proposed to us in the Scriptures, according to the teaching of the Church who has the right understanding of them.”* The collection of dogmas and truths of the Church are only believed because we know they come from God, who is the first Truth. This firm adherence to God as the first Truth, leads directly to trust – because faith is directly in a person (or persons). And trust in its turn, leads to abandonment to the one trusted in.

This is why one great means of growing in faith is to grow in trust. The more we trust God, the more we adhere to Him, and this is the condition of faith. Faith sees all things as coming from the one we believe, and trust adds the firm belief in the goodness of the one we believe.

There is a disconnect that can sometimes happen in souls who indeed have the faith and yet their faith hardly influences their daily life. With the profound changes that come about with the infusion of faith in a soul, how can this come about? What is the cause of this disconnect between faith and daily life? No doubt, it can be explained in several ways; the main factor being the impeding effect of sin and especially attachments to sin, which frustrate the work of grace in a soul. But might it not also find an explanation in the fact that some souls treat the faith as a set of beliefs and rules, instead of the belief in a person that results in total trust in that person? Indeed, our Catholic dogmas, definitions, and rules would be dead letters if they were separate from God. But they are not. The same God we believe in directly, reveals these things through His Scriptures and His Church, which is His mouthpiece. When we believe in the dogmas of the Catholic faith, we believe them precisely because we believe *God has revealed them.* God who can neither deceive nor be deceived.



We were blessed to have the First Mass of Fr. Gregory Pfeiffer - July 9th

The consecrated religious brother or sister is a person who has made the choice to live their whole life by faith. Hopefully, the Catholic layperson also does this. But perhaps one of the clearest differences is that for the layman it is relatively easy to lay aside his faith in this world and live consciously only on the natural level. He may go to Mass on Sunday; he may say his routine prayers; but the rest of the time it's fairly easy for him to forget God and the supernatural. However, with the religious this danger is not so obvious. Why? Because religious life makes no sense at all unless it is lived by faith. Faith is the reason religious life exists; faith gives its end, its purpose, and everything else that pertains to religious life. By his or her very state of life, a religious must live by faith. Everything in religious life is based on faith, and nothing makes sense without it.

"The just man lives by faith." We are all called to live thus; but for the religious it *is* his very life.



Brother Henry Mary – RIP

Our Rooster – King of seventy-five laying hens.





Roof repairs on the refectory and kitchen

First Blessings by Fr. Pfeiffer

Holy Angels Novitiate is the house of formation for the Brothers of the Society of Saint Pius X in the United States.

The Brothers of the Society are religious dedicated to the glory of God through the service of His priests. They accomplish this primarily through the observance of the three vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience—the foundations of Catholic religious life through the centuries—by their prayers and by their example. They also assist the priests of the Society in their apostolates in many different ways according to the needs of each individual priory. Brothers are currently engaged in teaching catechism, serving Mass, maintaining sacristies, and directing choirs. They also care for the material needs of the priests by cooking, performing maintenance, accounting, and completing innumerable small but useful tasks.

Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, founder of the Society of Saint Pius X and its Brothers, recognized the dignity and value of the Brothers' vocation when he exhorted them to be the "guardian angels of our communities." It was his wish that each priory of the Society would eventually have a resident religious Brother. This wish can only be realized through the selfless response of many souls to Christ's call together with the generosity of our benefactors. God will certainly reward all of them abundantly.

Donation Information

Please make out checks or money orders in US dollars only to: "Holy Angels Novitiate."

Holy Angels Novitiate

21077 Quarry Hill Rd.,
Winona, MN 55987
T (507) 454-8000
www.sspix.org

Upcoming Events

Brothers Vows Ceremony September 29th, 2023
Priest Retreat – Dec. 11-16th

Visit Our New Website:

www.holyangels-novitiate.com/en

— Please do not send cash since this is against US Postal Regulations.