

A Reflection on the Spiritual Life

Deacon Frank De Frank

The spiritual life—Christian life, interior life, supernatural life—in the Catholic tradition is a life lived in a personal relationship with God, which, gradually through his grace becomes deeper and deeper. It is the Holy Spirit at work within us, slowly transforming us into the unique people God created us to be. And in the process, this relationship also sheds light on our relationship with men and women around us and with creation.

The spiritual life is the outgrowth of a loving, thoughtful God who has loved us from all eternity... who has chosen to unite us to Himself in the closest intimacy.... who is living and acting within us. “In Him we live, move and have our being.” (ACTS 17:28)

It is real but finite participation in God’s life (grace). It is not identical with but similar to God’s. “It is a union with Jesus: the divine and the human giving themselves to each other. The only thing Jesus asks of us to give ourselves to Him, in total poverty, and total self-forgetfulness...” (Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta)

The ultimate goal of the spiritual life is nothing other than our continual consecration into Christ himself. It is an ongoing friendship and assimilation into the perfection of Christ. “No one can come to the Father except through me.”

The spiritual life does not begin with special knowledge and end within us. The secret of the spiritual life consists in this: that we try with a spirit of FAITH and with, sincerity of HEART (to unite ourselves to God in all the ordinary events of our daily lives in order to live with God and for God in order to live in union with Jesus and to imitate him; and to love one another with that love that the three Persons have for one another.

There is no issue in the personal, communa, or political sphere that is without spiritual significance. With FAITH, we find God everywhere: in church, on

A Reflection on the Spiritual Life

Deacon Frank De Frank

the street, in the home, at the office, in the commotion of the city, and in the quiet of the country. For FAITH encounters God where He is ... and ... God is everywhere.

The best rule for the spiritual life is this: to receive, moment by moment, whatever God sends us and to persevere at all cost union with God in spite of anything and everything. This staying in love, this call to holiness, this sanctification is a lifetime occupation ...AND...it isn't an option--if heaven is our goal. There are only saints in heaven.

Finally, there is no such thing as a generalized spiritual life. It is always personal, individual, progressive, and changing; and we all start from a different place.

Practicing the spiritual life is a personal journey of reconciling—(differences) and integrating (disparate parts) (positive and negative, human and divine, spiritual and material, being and doing, thinking and feeling,)—of looking for harmony and wholeness (holiness)... until the day we shed our body and live eternally in the FULLNESS of that spiritual life in the presence of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.