

Theory 2

HOLINESS

Objective – Be able to explain:

- I. What is Holiness?
- II. How do you become Holy?
- III. What role does prayer play in becoming Holy?

Part 1:

1. The Goal of Life: Holiness

- a. Holiness is transforming union with God by union with Jesus
- b. This is a union with God in which we participate in his divine being and activity as children of God.
 - i. 1 John 3:1-3: “Think of the love that the Father has lavished on us, by letting us be called God's children; and that is what we are...but what we are to be in the future has not yet been revealed; all we know is, that when it is revealed we shall be like him because we shall see him as he really is.
 - ii. John 17:21-23 “Father, may they be one in us, as you are in me and I am in you, so that the world may believe it was you who sent me. I have given them the glory you gave to me, that they may be one as we are one. With me in them and you in me...”
 - iii. 2 Peter 1:3-4 “By his divine power, he has given us all the things that we need for life and for true devotion, bringing us to know God himself, who has called us by his own glory and goodness. In making these gifts, he has given us the guarantee of something very great and wonderful to come: through them you will be able to share the divine nature and to escape corruption in a world that is sunk in vice.”
- c. The Catechism following the early Fathers of the Church teaches that the Son of God became Man so that we might share in the life of God.
 - i. “The Word became flesh to make us "partakers of the divine nature": "For this is why the Word became man, and the Son of God became the Son of man: so that man, by entering into communion with the Word and thus receiving divine sonship, might become a son of God." "For the Son of God became man so that we might become God." "The only begotten Son of God, wanting to make us sharers in his divinity, assumed our nature, so that he, made man, might make men gods." CCC 460

- ii. In the Liturgy of the Eucharist the priest prays
 - 1. By the mystery of this water and wine may we come to share in the divinity of Christ who humbled himself to share in our humanity.
- d. This is called Divinization or Theosis
 - i. We don't become God on our own
 - ii. But by union with Jesus we participate in the being and activity of God
 - iii. John of the Cross in *The Living Flame of Love* 2, 24 says that by union with Jesus our human intellect shares in the intellect of God, our feelings and emotions share in that of God, our will shares in the will of God, his ability to choose and love.
 - 1. "Although the substance of this soul is not the substance of God, since it cannot undergo a substantial conversion into him, it has become God through participation in God, being united to and absorbed in him, as it is in this state."
- e. "Spiritual Marriage"
 - i. God wants to unite us with himself in a union so perfect that we will think in a divine way, feel and desire in a divine way and choose, love and act in a divine way. We reach this perfection by union with Jesus
 - ii. Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross say the best symbol of this is marriage where two become one.
 - iii. Marriage is the expression of the joyous union that awaits us when we are perfectly united to God.
 - iv. But, of course, human marriage is a transitional symbol
 - 1. It's transitional because it doesn't last forever. Death does put an end to a marriage.
 - 2. And it's a symbol, because even if at some points you do think that this other person can make you totally happy – you soon find out that's not true.
 - v. But God offers us spiritual marriage – union with himself, the Perfect Person, who can make you totally happy.
 - 1. That's why Jesus describes heaven as a wedding feast. It's the celebration that the purpose of life has been reached – that happiness has been found.

Part 2:

2. How do we become Holy – how do we share in the life of God?

- a. Jesus **gives** His divine life to us
 - i. Primarily through the Liturgy and Sacraments
 - 1. Jesus gives His divine life to us beginning with Baptism.
 - 2. He nourishes and increases His divine life in us through the Eucharist.
 - 3. And when we diminish or destroy his life in us by sin, he will restore it by Reconciliation.
 - ii. Also through the good things of this world
- b. We **receive** His divine life by
 - i. Prayer
 - ii. Converting or changing from vice to virtue
 - 1. This is the great power of a daily Resolution
 - iii. By making our life, our human nature and every good thing of this world a potential avenue to receive God
 - 1. To do this we need a Recipe of Life

3. Prayer

- a. We must receive the gift of divine life offered in Jesus through Prayer
 - i. It is not enough for Jesus to *give* his divine life in the sacraments. It is not enough for us to just go to Mass. We must receive the gift Jesus offers.
 - ii. The Catechism reminds us that the fruits of the sacraments also depend on the disposition of the one who receives them. (1128)
 - iii. We must open our soul to receive the divine life Jesus gives in the Eucharist. We must open our soul to drink in the Living Water.
 - iv. We open our soul to receive by prayer.
 - 1. Teresa of Avila says specifically by mental prayer.
 - 2. Daily mental prayer – in the Rosary, or in Lectio Divina, opens the soul to drink the Living Water that flows from the heart of Jesus.
 - 3. So if we want to be like God, fully human and divine, we need the sacraments, but we also need daily mental prayer.

4. Vice to Virtue

- a. If we want to be holy, to be like God, then we need to think and feel and desire and act fully human and divine
- b. We need to become virtuous by practicing the virtues of
 - i. Faith – thinking like God by living the truth Jesus revealed.
 - ii. Hope – desiring what God desires and hating what God hates.

- iii. Charity – loving God above all and your neighbor as yourself.
- iv. Prudence – making good decisions
- v. Justice – giving to God and others and our community what they deserve.
- vi. Temperance – getting control of pride, vanity, envy, sloth, anger, greed, gluttony and lust.
- vii. Courage – always willing to sacrifice what is lesser for the sake of what is greater.

5. Recipe of Life

- a. God wants to give himself to us so that we can participate in his being and activity
 - i. God comes to us primarily through the Liturgy and the Sacraments
 - ii. And God comes to us through the good things of this world
- b. We must create Avenues to Receive God
 - i. Our human nature and every good thing of this world is a potential avenue to receive God
 - 1. If we cultivate the different aspects of our human nature,
 - 2. And if we pursue the good things of this world the way God designed them
 - 3. Then everything becomes a means to receive God and delight in him.
 - a. Everything becomes an avenue to receive God.
 - 4. So, by pursuing the good things of this world according to the way God designed us
 - a. We prepare ourselves for God to enter without any obstacle
 - 5. We develop ourselves so God can enter, elevate and perfect us
 - a. If we develop our intellect, then there is more of our intellect that God can sanctify and use like He did with St. Paul
 - b. If we develop ourselves morally then there is less that He has to purify and more for him to build upon
 - i. We can prepare or make ourselves more fit to receive God and be transformed by him.
- c. What do you want to be happy?
 - i. Union with God in Jesus Christ
 - 1. Receive the life of Jesus by frequent reception of the Sacraments
 - 2. Daily Mental Prayer
 - ii. Physical and Emotional health that comes from sleep, nutrition and hydration, exercise, hygiene, shelter, clothing, stability and variety, order and surprise
 - iii. Relationships with Family and Friends

- iv. Meaningful work in which we do some good for others and for the world
- v. Knowledge
 - 1. Our intellect needs to be fed by reality in the form of truth
- vi. Beauty
 - 1. Our emotions/passions need to be nourished by reality in the form of beauty

6. The purpose of life is to become holy – fully human and divine.

- a. But were not there yet. And in the process we will fall.
- b. Don't beat yourself up or get discouraged when you fall. That is just pride.
- c. Don't use your falls as an excuse to quit.
- d. When you fall, immediately turn to Jesus and say, "See, Lord what I am without you. I'm sorry. Forgive me."
- e. Go and receive his mercy, his excessive unconditional healing love in the sacrament of Reconciliation.
- f. For, the mercy of Jesus will give you what you need to get up after you fall and get moving, because we have somewhere to go – to Heaven!

In your own words explain:

What is Holiness?

How do you become Holy?

What role does prayer play in becoming Holy?

Using your own words AND the Theory notes, paraphrase:

What is Holiness?

How do you become Holy?

What role does prayer play in becoming Holy?