

Fr. Perozich comments —

Life in the church and in the world these days seems to move insecurely in crisis, tumult, instability, constant flux, fluidity. What seemed to be solid and reliable a generation or 2 ago appears to be no longer so.

Church teaching on sexuality, on the family, on salvation, on the real presence in the Eucharist and worthiness of its reception by faithful Catholics, what it means to be Christian, Catholic, American, a family, matrimony, patriotic, responsible are not what I used to know them to be.

The institutions in the world and of faith do not provide me a clear direction or path toward stability anymore

Navigating the change is not comfortable. I need a solid rock on which to stand, a real source of truth on which to rely in order to understand.

The spiritual writer of the fourth century reminds me that I already have one, Jesus Christ who is my rock (Eben ezer), my Savior, the Way, the Truth, the Life, even if the world He created or the church He founded do not always seem to present the clarity of the new life in Him as it did in my previous years of life on earth.

The writer guides me to understand that there is inevitably change, confusion, lies, falsehoods, oppression, joy, hope, and love in the journey toward heaven.

The collect from the Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time clearly expresses the soul's yearning for safety in God's unfailing care and protection, when I rely solely on Him, rather than institutions of human governance which always seem to fail men at times in history.

Grace is the power and presence of God. Jesus Christ is that grace communicated by the Holy Spirit.

So I rely solely on Jesus Christ, bringing to him my anxieties over worldly affairs, elections, unjust laws and orders, lack of clarity and consistency from some church leaders whose ideas echo modern worldly claims different from the timeless truths of Scripture and Tradition that I heard in years past.

With Jesus as my rock on which to stand, the cave in which I have shelter until the storm of destruction passes by, the wings of the eagle under which I may find safety and soar above the turmoils toward lasting peace, the Holy Spirit connects me with Jesus throughout life beyond my expectations of life to:

- mourn and lament*
- love and exult*
- suffer lowliness and being cast down*
- ineffable joy*
- engage the battle bravely*
- rest in pure spiritual pleasure*
- have inscrutable knowledge and ineffable wisdom*
- be like any ordinary man.*

It is not an either or, rather a both and, a training by the grace and presence of the Holy Spirit toward spiritual advancement.

I'd rather have peace all the time, but it just isn't so in the journey toward heaven relying solely on grace for one born again of the Holy Spirit.

Collect 5th Sunday Ordinary time:

Keep your family safe, O Lord, with unfailing care, that, relying solely on the hope of heavenly grace, they may be defended always by your protection. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

From a homily by a spiritual writer of the fourth century

(Hom. 18, 7-11: PG 34, 639-642)

May you be filled to the complete fullness of Christ

Those who have been considered worthy to go forth as the sons of God and to be born again of the Holy Spirit from on high, and who hold within them the Christ who renews them and fills them with light, are directed by the Spirit in varied and different ways and in their spiritual repose they are led invisibly in their hearts by grace.

- At times, they are like men who mourn and lament over their fellow men, and pouring forth prayers for the whole human race, they plunge into tears and lamentation, on fire with spiritual love for mankind.
- At other times they are enkindled by the Spirit with love and exultation that, were it possible, they would clasp in their embrace all mankind, without discrimination, good and bad alike.
- Sometimes they are cast down below all mankind in lowliness of spirit, so that they reckon theirs to be the lowest and most abject of conditions.
- And sometimes they are held by the Spirit in ineffable joy.
- At one time they are like a brave man who puts on the king's full armor and goes down into battle; he fights bravely against the enemy and defeats them. In like manner, the spiritual man takes up the heavenly

arms of the Spirit and marches against the enemy and engaging in battle tramples the foe beneath his feet.

- At another time the soul is at rest in deepest silence, tranquility and peace, existing in sheer spiritual pleasure and in ineffable repose and a perfect state.
- Again, the soul is instructed by grace in a certain understanding in the ineffable wisdom and the inscrutable knowledge of the Spirit on matters which neither tongue nor lips can utter.
- Then again, the soul becomes like any ordinary man.

In such varied ways does grace work within them and many are the means by which it leads the soul, renewing it according to God's will and training it in different ways so that it may be set before the heavenly Father pure and whole and blameless.

We, too, therefore must make our prayer to God and entreat in love and in great hope that he may bestow upon us the heavenly grace of the gift of the Spirit. We pray that we, too, may be guided by that Spirit and that he may lead us into the fullness of divine will and refresh us with the varied kinds of his repose, that by the help of this guidance, exercise of grace and spiritual advancement, we may be considered worthy to attain to the perfection of the fullness of Christ, as the Apostle says: *that you may be filled to the complete fullness of Christ.*