



United in Mary, We Carry the Cross

Father J. Kentenich, *On Monday Evenings*, *January 22, 1956

The Need For Grace

In the following words from Father Kentenich, we hear about the need for grace in the soul. In this time of Lent, we offer our prayers, sacrifices, and renunciations as a means to grow in grace and let the breath of God be active within us. For us, as couples, we strive to become one in heart and soul, through his grace. We know that often we fail in our resolutions to allow God's grace be effective, but

... we also have to count that there is human weakness which is not wickedness. [St.] Paul himself is saying, he too has asked that he wanted to be freed from certain weaknesses. He received the answer: No, I do not free you. My grace is sufficient for you.¹ Indeed, that is also true for us. The grace of God is given to us again and again so that we can fight anew and in spite of it strive towards the ideal.*

- ❖ What is the difference between weakness and wickedness? How do we let grace work in our souls?

The Grace

Among the graces we receive through the sacrament of marriage, our Catechism teaches us, we find the grace to carry Christ's cross, as a couple. It says:

Christ dwells with [the spouses], gives them the strength to take up their crosses and so follow him, to rise again after they have fallen, to forgive one another, to bear one another's burdens, to "be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ," and to love one another with supernatural, tender, and fruitful love (CCC, 1642).

- ❖ Based on this text, make a list of the effects of this grace within the life of the married couple. What do these mean in practical life?

The Effect

Father Kentenich explained the effects of this grace to the couples in Milwaukee by relating it to our practical faith in Divine Providence. Throughout the events of our lives, we

are able to see when and where Christ gave us his shoulders to carry our cross.

"Our Lord also cried out in agony in the garden when he foresaw what he was to suffer. Yet, he, too, said, 'Not my will, but yours be done.'²

"Perhaps we, too, have a heavy cross to bear. We may tell the heavenly Father how heavy the cross is, and ask him for the help we need. But we should always add, 'Not my will, but yours be done.'

"We want to have complete confidence in Divine Providence. We know that God will send only what we are able to carry. If the load is too heavy, he will strengthen us by putting, as it were, his own shoulders under the beams of the cross."*

- ❖ As a couple, identify at least one event in your history where you can definitely see that Christ was carrying your common cross.

Our Collaboration

By virtue of our covenant of love with the Blessed Mother, Schoenstatt children have the special task to collaborate with God's grace in order to make it effective in our everyday lives. This is our commitment upon entering the couples' league and embracing the call to holiness through our spirituality. The capital of grace is our best means! As a reminder of this call and task, the Church tells every Catholic faithful that,

Grace is first and foremost the gift of the Spirit who justifies and sanctifies us. But grace also includes the gifts that the Spirit grants us to associate us with his work, to enable us to collaborate in the salvation of others and in the growth of the Body of Christ, the Church. There are sacramental graces, gifts proper to the different sacraments. There are furthermore special graces... (CCC, 2003).

- ❖ During the coming days of Lent, what will we consciously offer as contributions to the capital of grace? These gifts of love for the MTA will help the husband carry the cross of his wife and his wife carry the cross of her husband. Do we believe this?

¹ Compare 2 Cor 12: 7-9.

²Comp. Mt 26: 39 ff.