

Seeds of Hope, Stories for Lent #27 – *The Secret to Sanctity*

Today's Story Seed comes from Cardinal François-Joseph Mercier, a Belgian Cardinal of the Roman Catholic Church and a noted Thomist scholar. He had several of his works translated into other languages.

Before he died in 1926, he once shared what he considered to be the secret of happiness and holiness. The secret is to just take five minutes every day to close our eyes as a way of shutting out the distractions; close our ears to the sounds and noise around us; and enter deeply into the sanctuary of our soul. Then we will discover the presence of the Holy Spirit within us.

Cardinal Mercier then suggests we should pray a prayer like this:

“Holy Spirit, soul of my soul, enlighten me, guide me, strengthen me and help me. Tell me what I need to do and help me to do it. I promise to be submissive to you in everything that you permit to happen to me. Only, show me what is Your will.”

He said if we pray this way, in fact, the Holy Spirit will answer our prayer, come to show us what we need to see and know, and help us to do what we need to do. And grace will be with us all day long!

This submission to the Holy Spirit, Cardinal Mercier tells us, is the secret to sanctity.

Today, may we take the time to pray in just such a way that would invite the Holy Spirit, who is deep within our soul, to guide us, to help us, to strengthen us, and to do in us what it is God wants us to achieve. It is then, I believe, that we will truly have found the secret of happiness and holiness. Isn't that worth five minutes a day?

Remember this beautiful prayer...

“Holy Spirit, soul of my soul, enlighten me, guide me, strengthen me and help me. Tell me what I need to do and help me to do it. I promise to be submissive to you in everything that you permit to happen to me. Only, show me what is Your will.”

Amen? Amen!

For Further Reflection...

Recite the prayer and shut your eyes for a few minutes.

- 1. What distractions did you have to force out of your mind?***
- 2. What peaceful, spiritual thoughts filled your mind?***

“If you, with all your sins, know how to give your children good things, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him?” Luke 11:13