

## Theological Virtues, or 3 Habits of Highly Effective Catholics

Fr. Peter Hannah, OP | 12-18-21

Romans 5:1-5: *"Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in our hope of sharing the glory of God. More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us."*

I. The Human Person: Body-Soul, Intellect-Will

II. The Meaning of Life: Happiness, Virtue, Baptism

III. Theological Virtues:

i. Faith: Relationship with God

ii. Hope: Confident Expectation of Life Eternal

iii. Charity: Friendship with God

Concluding Thoughts: How develop the virtues?



### Act of Faith

O my God, I firmly believe that you are one God in three Divine Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. I believe in Jesus Christ, Your Son, who became man and died for our sins, and who will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe these and all truths which the Holy Catholic Church teaches, because You have revealed them, who can neither deceive nor be deceived. Amen.

### Act of Hope

O my God, trusting in Your infinite goodness and promises, I hope to obtain pardon of my sins, the help of Your grace, and life everlasting, through the merits of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Redeemer. Amen.

### Act of Love

O my God, I love you above all things, with my whole heart and soul, because You are all-good and worthy of all my love. I love my neighbor as myself for love of You. I forgive all who have injured me, and I ask pardon of all whom I have injured. Amen.

Saint Francis Explains Perfect Joy  
A Story of the Poor Man of Assisi

On a cold winter's day, Saint Francis walked with Brother Leo from Perugia to the Porziuncola. Because of their poverty, they suffered much in the cold. At one point, Saint Francis said to Brother Leo: "If God desired that the Friars Minor should serve as a great example of holiness to all people in all lands, please write down that this would not be perfect joy." At some point later in their journey, Saint Francis said to Brother Leo: "If the Friars Minor could make the lame walk; if we could straighten the crooked; if we could chase away demons; if we could give sight to the blind and speech to the dumb; and even if we could raise the dead after four days, please write down and note carefully that this would not be perfect joy."

Soon after, Saint Francis said to Brother Leo: "If the Friars Minor could speak every language; if they knew everything about science; if they could explain all the scriptures; if they could predict the future and reveal the secrets of every soul, please write down and note carefully that this would not be perfect joy." After a few more steps, Saint Francis cried: "Brother Leo, little one of God! If the Friars Minor could sing like angels; if they could explain the movements of the stars; if they knew everything about all animals, birds, fish, plants, stones, trees, and all men, please write down and note carefully that this would not be perfect joy." Finally, Saint Francis cried again: "Brother Leo, if the Friars Minor could preach and thus convert every person to faith in Christ, please write down and note carefully that even this is not perfect joy."

When this manner of discourse lasted for several miles, Brother Leo, who had been thinking about these sayings, asked: "Father Francis, I pray that you will teach me about perfect joy." Saint Francis answered: "If we arrive at the Porziuncola and if we are drenched with rain and trembling with cold, covered in mud and exhausted from hunger; and if we knock on the convent gate; and if we are not recognized by the porter; and if he tells us that we are impostors who seek to deceive the world and steal from the poor; and if he refuses to open the gate; and if he leaves us outside, exposed to the rain and snow, suffering from cold and hunger; then if we embrace the injustice, cruelty, and contempt with patience, without complaining; and if we believe in faith, love, and humility that the porter knew us but was told by God to reject us, then, my dear Brother Leo, please write down and note carefully that this also is perfect joy!"

Saint Francis then said: "Brother Leo, if we knock again and if the porter drives us away with curses and blows; and if he accuses us of robbery and other crimes; and if we embrace this with patience without complaining; and if we believe in faith, love, and humility that the porter knew us but was told by God to reject us again, then, my dear Brother Leo, please write down and note carefully that this is finally perfect joy!" Saint Francis said once more: "If urged by cold and hunger, we knock again; if we call again to the porter; if we plead to him with many tears to open the gate and to give us shelter out of love for God; and if he returns more angry than ever; and if he calls us annoying rascals and beats us with a knotted stick; and if he throws us to the ground, rolls us in the snow, and beats us again with the knotted stick; and if we bear these injuries with patience without complaining; and if we think upon the sufferings of our Blessed Crucified Lord, then, most beloved Brother Leo, please write down and note carefully that this, finally, is perfect joy!"

Finally, Saint Francis said: "Brother Leo, please listen to me. Above all gifts of the Holy Spirit, that Christ Jesus gives to his friends is the grace to overcome oneself, to accept willingly, out of love for Him, all contempt, all discomfort, all injury, and all suffering. In this and all other gifts, we ourselves should not boast because all things are gifts from God. Remember the words of Saint Paul: 'What do you have that you did not receive from God? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as if it were not a gift (1 Corinthians 4:7)?' But in the cross of afflictions and suffering, we truly can glory because as Saint Paul says again: 'May I never boast of anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world (Galatians 6:14).' Amen."