

their soul mortal sin, the only robber able to deprive them of that good so precious. It is a great misfortune that this treasure should be so little known among Christians. Ask them the meaning of sanctifying grace, and the majority know not what to answer.

We must further observe that this grace, like all other treasures, is susceptible of increase. It is an article of Faith that souls adorned with sanctifying grace, merit its increase in proportion to their good works. Every time they make the sign of the Cross, or invoke the Name of Jesus, they receive an increase of grace ; with how much more reason, then, when they make an act of the love of God, hear Holy Mass, approach the Holy Table, etc.

Let us judge from what has been said of the treasures that are accumulated in the soul of good Christians habitually exempt from mortal sin. By every one of the thousands of good works which they perform, they acquire new degrees of grace, which go on multiplying to infinity. Now, to the degrees of grace acquired in this life, correspond the degrees of glory that they shall possess in Paradise.

Examination of conscience

Let us return to our first proposition. It is an Article of Faith, defined by the First Council of Lateran and the Council of Trent, that the sinner, in order to obtain pardon, must confess all his mortal sins without excepting any. There is question here of mortal sins recalled after a proper examination of conscience. Those that are not recalled after such an examination, are pardoned at the same time as the others. If, however, sins thus omitted, return to the memory, we must, although they are already pardoned, accuse ourselves of them in our next confession.

We must, then, accuse ourselves of all the mortal sins that we can remember after a proper examination of conscience. Then, such an examination of conscience is necessary. This necessity is, however, not absolute, but only relative. In other words, the examination is not required for all, but only for those that, by omitting it, expose themselves to forget mortal sins.