

this knowledge? If we look at ourselves a little closely and ask ourselves, what have we that we may boast about? the answer flashes back to us: Nothing but a mass of physical, intellectual and moral miseries. "No man hath anything of his own save lying and sin." All that we have, all that we are, comes from God, and not from ourselves. For this we can glory in the goodness of God, but in nothing else.

Creation, preservation, redemption, sanctification, are all gifts of God. With lavish hand He gave us whatever natural gifts and perfections we possess; life and its train of benefits; the talents we have; the senses of the body to enjoy external nature; the faculties of the soul to recall, know and love all that He did for us. What have we of our own in all this to be proud of? If we turn to the loftier spheres of grace, what have we there that we can call our own? Is it the supernatural gifts that adorn our soul; or the blood that redeemed us; or the grace of freedom from eternal death? Is it the gift of vocation, not merely to the Christian faith, but to the Catholic Church? If "no man can come to Me unless it be given him by My Father," says Christ, whence come the lights we receive whereby our minds may know God better? whence those movements of the will whereby we may love Him more ardently? Can we even claim as ours the very means that are given us to sanctify ourselves, the sacraments, the prayers that are said for us, the examples of the saints, the devotions that help us to walk so sweetly along the rugged road to heaven? We can lay no claim to any of these things. We are the authors of ingratitude and sin. How, then, can we be puffed up with pride?

Self-knowledge is a fertile source of humility. But the speculative knowledge of our own helplessness does not suffice to make us humble. We must not only *know*, but *achieve* as well. The best way to acquire humility is to experience humiliations. It seems little to admit the truth