

of virtue cannot by any possibility be formed without voluntary mortification. Sorrow is needful for the fertility of grace. If a man is not making constant sacrifices, he is deceiving himself and is not advancing in spirituality. If a man is not denying himself daily, he is not carrying the cross. These are axioms which at all times offend our weakness and self-indulgence. But they are of peculiar importance in times like these, when comforts and even luxuries are almost universal. It is comfort, which is the ruin of holiness. Gayety, fashion, ostentation, expensiveness, dissipation, frivolity are undoubtedly not the component parts of sanctity. There is a smoothness in the mere lapse of a comfortable life which is fatal to holiness. Now, all the forms, and images, and associations, and pictures, and ideas, of the devotion to the Precious Blood breathe sacrifice. Their fragrance is the odor of sacrifice. Their beauty the austerity of sacrifice. They tease the soul with a constant sense of dissatisfaction and distrust with whatsoever is not sacrifice ; and this teasing is the solicitation of grace. In time they infect us with a love of sacrifice ; and to gain this love of sacrifice is to have surmounted the first ascent of holiness, and to be breathing the pure air and yet treading the more level road of the upper table-land of the mountains of perfection.

It is the very mission of the devotion to the Precious Blood to preach a crusade against quiet, sinless comforts.

What more can we say ? Sweet worship of the Blood of God ! a worship with so many of man's peculiar rights in it, embracing all theology in itself and then turning all its vast theology into tenderly triumphant song ! Dear Fountain that rises in the heart of God's human Mother, and flows down through Communion over the souls of men into the Bosom of the Eternal Father, while those countless souls, like the pebbles of the stream, make everlasting music as it flows ! It is consoling to feel that the Precious Blood is bearing us onward into that adorable Abyss of Love and is carrying us this hour with such breathless swiftness to our home, our home with the Mortal Mother and the Unbeginning Father of the Eternal Son.

*Extract from "The Precious Blood" Father Faber.*