

# WINNOWING FAN

The Spiritual Life according to the Fathers  
and Saints of the Catholic Church in  
preparation for Christ's Second Coming.

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## THE BEATITUDES

When a soul has repented God raises him up to the first Beatitude. The goal, in fact, of the Life of Repentance is to be poor in spirit. But one cannot attain to the Beatitude by his own effort. It is a work of God. God will have to raise us up to the first Beatitude and God alone can raise us higher to the higher Beatitudes.

But when a soul is in the first Beatitude and God has plans for him then God raises him up the higher Beatitudes and even to the perfection of Charity, enabling such a person to be the salt and light of a vast number of souls. This usually happens when the one who attains the first Beatitude is a priest or a bishop. God raises him higher so he can be a great help to many souls. Such was the case with the Fathers of the Church.

But when a priest or bishop has not attained the first Beatitude due to a defective life of Repentance, then there is no way by which God can raise him up to the higher Beatitudes. And there is no way that he can be the salt or light of the world. He can still be of some help to the Church but only as much as an ordinary father can be of help to his family. He can only teach others the stage of repentance he has attained, not more. And this is less than what is required for salvation.

In teaching souls, we teach them to aim at the perfection of charity as their final and ultimate goal, but to aim at the first Beatitude for their proximate goal, keeping in mind that only God can raise us up to the first Beatitude and from there God alone can raise us up the higher Beatitudes.

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## THE ACT OF FAITH

The act of faith is often described as an act of the intellect. But the complete picture is that faith is an act of both the intellect and the free will. Faith and Charity are two distinct theological virtues. Faith is an act of the intellect while Charity is an act of the free will. The goal of the theological virtues is God. The object of Charity is God and the object of Faith is the means that lead to God.

When a soul makes an act of Faith, whose object is the means that lead to God, it must first direct its final object directly to God, before aiming at the means that lead to God. And so the act of Charity, no matter how small, must begin before the act of Faith can begin. That is why Faith and Charity must go in hand. With Charity Faith is complete. Without Charity Faith is dead.

PROPOSITIONS in the Act  
of Faith.

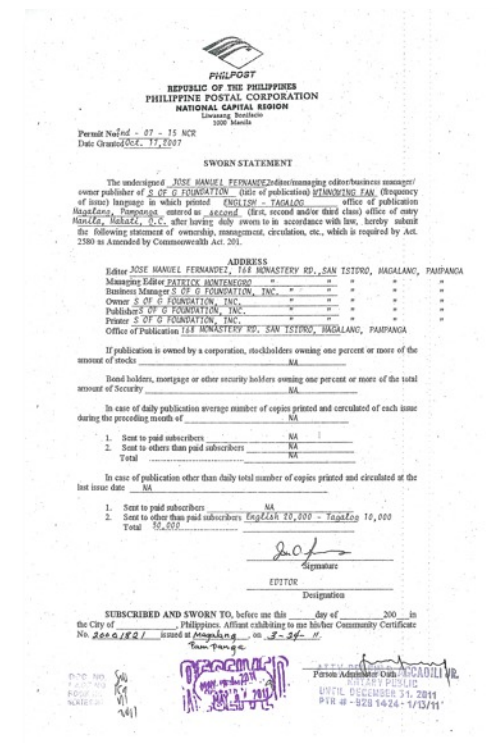
The goal of the theological virtues is God. The direct goal of Charity is God. The formal goal of Faith is God but the material goal of Faith is the propositions (or truths) that lead to God.

The beginnings of Faith tell us that there is a God and that God spoke to us.

Charity makes us desire to love God and find out what He said.

Having found out what God said,  
Faith makes us believe the words God  
said (in the form of commandments) just  
because He said it.

These commandments are a list of what good God wants us to do and what evils He wants us to avoid. Finding out what God wants us to do and avoid is motivated by Charity. Studying and believing these propositions is the object of Faith. The propositions are not God but lead us to God.



## Relation between FAITH AND CHARITY

St. Paul mentioned that if one had Faith that can move mountains and does not have Charity, he is like a gong.....Now, how do things really work?

Faith has many degrees. Christ, Himself, used to describe the Faith of his disciples as weak Faith several times. There must have been several kinds of weak Faith. There seems to be, also, strong Faiths as that of the Syro-Phoenician woman, the Centurion and the Samaritan woman.

So there is a weak Faith that cannot trigger the CONSENT of the free will. That will be a Faith without Charity. The ASSENT in the act of Faith must be intense enough to trigger the CONSENT.

On the other hand, when Charity follows Faith, that very Charity improves the act of Faith.

### FAITH vs OPINION

Faith is a combination of the assent of the intellect and the consent of the free will. This is not yet Charity but merely the act of faith.

For faith to make an assent the intellect must have overwhelming

evidence of the truth of a proposition of dogma. This overwhelming evidence may be in the natural level in which case the assent of faith is in the natural level.

But if the overwhelming evidence is because of the dictates of Charity, then the assent is in the moral or supernatural level.

### SUPERIORITY of CONSENT by the FREE WILL

The complete act of Faith begins with the free will focusing its attention on its final goal which is God. It is followed by the intellect's knowing who is God and ASSENTING to the truths that God had revealed because He is God. If the ASSENT is done well it is followed by the CONSENT of the free will.

The consent of the free will has three effects. First, God becomes present to the believer. The believer encounters God.

Secondly, the believer makes a commitment to the demands or commandments of God.

Thirdly, he develops a moral conduct according to his commitment.

That is how a soul becomes a saint. A saint is one whose Faith and Charity are perfect.....whose assent and consent are perfect.

## BE PERFECT as the Heavenly ...

Many find this command impossible. And it is impossible without the grace from God. But here we must know the part of man that will dispose his soul for that grace.

We need graces to be perfect which will make us merit the Beatific Vision. Two virtues that come with graces are Faith and Charity.

Charity is what moves the act of faith. Since the two virtues are needed for perfection both must be perfect. If faith is imperfect, then both will be imperfect and are not considered virtues. As such these virtues cannot lead the soul to perfection.

**W**hen a man is filled with pride, his guardian angel, who is near him and who urges him to care for righteousness, withdraws from him. And when a man has offended this angel and the angel withdraws from him, a stranger (the spirit of darkness) draws near, and from then onwards the man ceases to care about righteousness.

A humble man is never hurried, hasty or perturbed, never has any hot or flitting thoughts, but at all times remains calm. Nothing can ever surprise, disturb or dismay him, for he suffers neither fear nor change in tribulations, neither surprise nor elation in enjoyment. All his joy and gladness are in what is pleasing to the Lord.

St. Isaac of Syria

## DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FAITH AND CHARITY in the Creed.

The Creed is recited during Mass and we say "I believe in one God." When we recite the Creed because we want to be saved, we recite with Faith. When we recite the Creed because we love God then we recite it with Faith enlivened with Charity.

Acts of Faith are usually motivated by desire for reward. Acts of Faith enlivened by Charity are motivated by a desire for a personal relationship with God.

