

The Gift of Fortitude

“I can do all things in him who strengthens me” (Phil 4:13)

- The gift of Fortitude perfects the virtue of fortitude (courage).
- It gives the will an impulse and an energy which renders it capable of suffering joyfully and intrepidly, and of accomplishing great projects, overcoming all obstacles.

The strength of God

- The measure and norm of the gift of fortitude is infinite strength, **the strength of God.**
- By means of this gift the Holy Spirit prompts us to do all that the strength of God can do. In the supernatural order, under the movement of the Holy Spirit, creatures are actually clothed with the strength of God. St. Paul does not exaggerate when he says: “I can do all things in him who strengthens me.” The words may seem boastful and proud: I can do everything. How can St. Paul say this when the ability to do everything is proper to God alone? What he means is: **I can do everything because I depend on God, because I possess his strength, because I am clothed in his divine fortitude.**

The strength of God

- With this strength we can conquer every difficulty.
- In fact, we often observe how **obstacles become a means to some good end** in the all-powerful hands of God. And with this same strength we can overcome all dangers, for none is so grave as to withstand the power of the Most High.

Confidence and peace

- Not only does the gift of fortitude help us overcome difficulties and avoid dangers, but it also **gives us a confidence** like that which the Apostle Paul describes in the passage just cited.
- It is a confidence, a security, that produces **peace in our souls** in the midst of dangers, in struggles, in all our tribulations.

The strength of the Saints

- It is wonderful to see how the Holy Spirit strengthened the Saints in their missions through the gift of Fortitude. For example,
 - St. Francis of Assisi,
 - St. Ignatius, the Bishop of Antioch,
 - and St. Therese of Avila.

Cultivate the Gift of Fortitude

- We need to cultivate this gift
 - a) by imploring it constantly in **prayer**, and
 - b) by fostering a profound **humility** to remain **docile** in God's hands and accomplish that which he wants us to realize through us.

Let us pray

Come, Holy Spirit, Light of souls!

Open our eyes that we may perceive the wonders in our hearts!

Enlighten us, move us, quicken us, prompt us, that we may forget this poor exterior world, so deficient and imperfect, and may live in that other, interior world, where Thou art and where, like a splendid Sovereign, Thou dost give us your gifts of infinite power.

Amen.