



## FIAT-Newsletter Nr 70 – October 2019

### ***Become a saint ... you too?***

*In his apostolic exhortation "Gaudete and Exultate", (March 2018), Pope Francis offers us - by offering us some concrete ways - a deepening of our vocation to holiness, a vocation inherent to our baptism.*

*This is how the Holy Father tells us: Are you married? Be holy by loving and caring for your husband or wife, as Christ did with the Church.*

We are frequently tempted to think that holiness is only for those who can withdraw from ordinary affairs to spend much time in prayer. That is not the case. We are all called to be holy by living our lives with love and by bearing witness in everything we do, wherever we find ourselves. Are you called to the consecrated life? Be holy by living out your commitment with joy.

Are you married? Be holy by loving and caring for your husband or wife, as Christ does for the Church. Do you work for a living? Be holy by labouring with integrity and skill in the service of your brothers and sisters. Are you a parent or grandparent? Be holy by patiently teaching the little ones how to follow Jesus. Are you in a position of authority? Be holy by working for the common good and renouncing personal gain.

### ***By a multiform beauty ...***

Let the grace of your baptism bear fruit in a path of holiness. Let everything be open to God; turn to him in every situation. Do not be dismayed, for the power of the Holy Spirit enables you to do this, and holiness, in the end, is the fruit of the Holy Spirit in your life (cf. *Gal 5:22-23*). When you feel the temptation to dwell on your own weakness, raise your eyes to Christ crucified and say: "Lord, I am a poor sinner, but you can work the miracle of making me a little bit better". In the Church, holy yet made up of sinners, you will find everything you need to grow towards holiness. The Lord has bestowed on the Church the gifts of scripture, the sacraments, holy places, living communities, the witness of the saints and a multifaceted beauty that proceeds from God's love, "like a bride bedecked with jewels" (*Is 61:10*).

### ***Small gestures***

This holiness to which the Lord calls you will grow through small gestures. Here is an example: a woman goes shopping, she meets a neighbour and they begin to speak, and the gossip starts. But she says in her heart: "No, I will not speak badly of anyone". This is a step forward in holiness. Later, at home, one of her children wants to talk to her about his hopes and dreams, and even though she is tired, she sits down and listens with patience and love. That is another sacrifice that brings holiness. Later she experiences some anxiety, but recalling the love of the Virgin Mary, she takes her rosary and prays with faith. Yet another path of holiness. Later still, she goes out onto the street, encounters a poor person and stops to say a kind word to him. One more step.



*"Even today, Jesus is born of Mary and the Holy Spirit".*

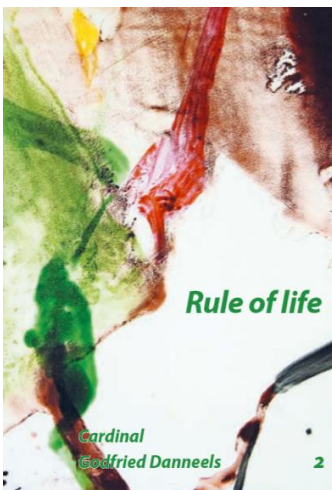
+ L.J. Cardinal Suenens

## Ordinary exercises in an extraordinary way"

At times, life presents great challenges. Through them, the Lord calls us anew to a conversion that can make his grace more evident in our lives, "in order that we may share his holiness" (Heb 12:10). At other times, we need only find a more perfect way of doing what we are already doing: "There are inspirations that tend solely to perfect in an extraordinary way the ordinary things we do in life". When Cardinal François-Xavier Nguyễn van Thuân was imprisoned, he refused to waste time waiting for the day he would be set free. Instead, he chose "to live the present moment, filling it to the brim with love". He decided: "I will seize the occasions that present themselves every day; I will accomplish ordinary actions in an extraordinary way".

In this way, led by God's grace, we shape by many small gestures the holiness God has willed for us, not as men and women sufficient unto ourselves but rather "as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Pet 4:10). The New Zealand bishops rightly teach us that we are capable of loving with the Lord's unconditional love, because the risen Lord shares his powerful life with our fragile lives: "His love set no limits and, once given, was never taken back. It was unconditional and remained faithful. To love like that is not easy because we are often so weak. But just to try to love as Christ loved us shows that Christ shares his own risen life with us. In this way, our lives demonstrate his power at work – even in the midst of human weakness".

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### Rule of life – Cardinal Danneels

*"Baptism is the beginning of the path of life for a Christian. Anyone who travels along this path needs a directional signpost. One needs a little rule of life. One needs food for the journey which is: the Word of God and his way for touching us, the sacraments. Listening and experiencing, however, takes time. This is not always easy. There are responsibilities and daily worries. But this regimen will not hinder. It will help each person – in his or her own situation – to do what God asks."*

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***"Whatever the gift that you're willing to present to God, do not forget to entrust it to Mary, because grace goes back to the donor through the same channel that brought it. "***

**(St Bernard, 12<sup>th</sup> century)**

The whole FIAT apostolate is based on voluntary work. However the running of the international secretarial office requires some funding. We are very often invited to offer reductions on costs for sending rosaries and various evangelization tools to economically weak countries. We are grateful for financial support.

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#### Responsible editor:

Roger Matthys, FIAT Association asbl - Copyright © 2019 – All rights reserved.  
P/A Diocesaan Pastoraal Centrum, Frederik de Merodestraat 18 - 2800 Mechelen (Belgium)

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