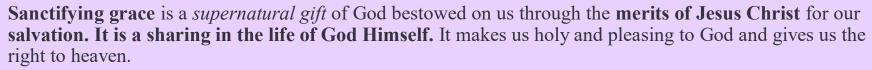
This week I would like to share with you some thoughts on **grace**. There are many kinds of graces: sanctifying, actual, sacramental, etc. And, what is grace?

GRACE is a **free gift** given to us by God because He **loves** us and has **mercy** on us. God forgive us and give us grace because He loves us, not because of anything we have done to earn it. (Thank you, God.)

That we **exist** is through God's **grace**. (Again, thank you God for the gift of life.) Creation is filled with God's grace. That the sun shines and the rain falls is due to God's grace.



Actual grace is a *supernatural help* of God which enlightens our mind and strengthens our will to do good and to avoid evil.

The definition I learned and love about actual grace is this: "actual grace is a passing help from God". This means that it is **not** always there. It's only there when we need it. We don't have the grace **now** for something that is going to happen tomorrow, next week or in the future. Grace will be there when the time comes. So, when you begin to worry about something in the **future**, say to yourself, "I don't have the grace for that **now**. It will be there when I need it." And it will.

Examples of actual graces: If someone's name comes to mind, actual grace can nudge you on to call them, send them a card or say a prayer for them. It is also there when you have a million things to do, yet stop to help or listen to someone or, when you are **patient** with others even when they interrupt you or finish your sentences.

I am so grateful for actual graces. They have helped me get through challenging times in my life as well as nittygritty situations. Just this morning when I was praying, I was distracted about finishing this letter and I heard these words: "You don't have the grace for that **now.** It will be there when you get to your computer later." So, I went back to praying.

One of the things we need to remember about grace is that we can resist it or pass it by because we have a free will. God does not force us to accept His grace. It's our choice!

- Are you remembering to take **quiet pauses** during the day?
- Who have you **affirmed** today at home? At work? At lunch?
- Are you aware of any **nudges** (actual graces) in your life today? Yesterday?

