

## REFLECTION

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Of all the creatures on earth, we are the greatest with the highest dignity. And that's simply because we have been created "in the image and likeness" of God. To our nature that is rational, i.e., with intelligence and will, and not merely biological, is added the potency to enter into the supernatural life of God that is made possible with God's grace that he himself gives, or at least makes available to us in abundance.

This identity and dignity of ours is, of course, given to us by our Creator. It is not something that we give to ourselves, although we have the duty to uphold and defend it, protecting it from anything that can deform or degrade it.

This truth about ourselves is not anymore a merely natural truth, but a truth of faith that can only be accepted by faith. Nonetheless, it is a truth that our nature, even if wounded, would have a natural longing.

We always want to believe in something or someone, more than simply relying on our reason that can only take so much at a time. That's why we can rightly describe ourselves as creatures of faith more than as merely rational creatures. The history of the different cultures somehow lends credence to that.

That is why it is important that we exert effort to know and understand very well this truth of faith, and from there conform our life, from our thinking, attitudes to our desires, words and behavior, to this wonderful reality presented to us.

It is a dignity that merges all the good qualities we can find in God who, in fact, is all goodness. We may feel awkward to realize this truth, but that simply is how we are supposed to be. We should just persist in our effort of relishing and incarnating this truth little by little but

consistently. For sure, this is not a gratuitous, baseless aspiration.

Yes, with this dignity, we are supposed to adopt the very mind of God himself, to share in his wisdom and power, and to cooperate, with utmost freedom, with his ways and providence. We need to feel at home with this reality and do our best to fulfill the duties involved in it.

That means that we have to be continually be in the presence of God, and exert a continuing effort to know and love him, spending time in prayer, in spiritual reading, going to the sacraments, especially of confession and the Holy Eucharist, etc. The ideal situation would be that our very consciousness is filled with God's presence and not simply with our own thoughts.

We have to be wary of our tendency also to distort this very fundamental truth about ourselves. Since we are free, we can tend to misuse our freedom and dare to be on our own, if not, to be our own God.

This was what happened to Lucifer who became Satan, and to our first parents who were tempted by the devil to eat the forbidden fruit so that they can become god. This was what happened to those who

dared to build the tower of Babel, and to the long chain of human rebellions against God that continue up to now.

In all of these episodes, the rotten core is pride that detaches our great dignity from its true source. This is where we plunge into an intoxicating condition of megalomania, falling into an illusion of grandeur that has no basis.

Pride that leads to megalomania is a very sweet poison, a very brilliant if blinding light that is actually false. With it, we get convinced we are doing ok when in fact we are not. And sometimes, it can be so invincible that there would be practically no more way for us to get out of that miserable condition.

Obviously, we should never lose hope. In spite of the enormity of the problem, the grace of God, his mercy and compassion can always undo evil. "Where sin has abounded, the grace of God has abounded even more."

At the moment, we have to be wary of the drift toward megalomania in the area of our new technologies. These give us tremendous power such that we may think we are already all-powerful,

and can afford to forget that all power actually comes from God.

Submitting the power of the new technologies to God and his will and ways will enhance our dignity, not undermine it. This is what we should consciously do if only to avoid the slippery slope to megalomania.