

Grace: What is it?

Grace is from the Latin *gratia*, which translates the Greek *charis*. In all three languages, grace and its equivalents are words with several related meanings. Grace can mean gift, beauty, mercy, pleasing, or thankful. DEF: The free and unmerited favor of God; a share in the divine life infused into the soul by the Holy Spirit to heal from sin and sanctify.

Grace is a GIFT from God. We CANNOT EARN grace, but we can dispose ourselves to be more receptive of Gods Grace. If grace could be earned then it is not a gift, rather it is payment for work.

Among the principal means of grace are the sacraments (especially the Eucharist, and Penance), prayers and good works i.e. (Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy).

II. GRACE

CCC 1996 Our justification comes from the grace of God. Grace is *favor*, the free and undeserved help that God gives us to respond to his call to become children of God, adoptive sons, partakers of the divine nature and of eternal life.⁴⁶

CCC 1997 Grace is a *participation in the life of God*. It introduces us into the intimacy of Trinitarian life: by Baptism the Christian participates in the grace of Christ, the Head of his Body.

CCC 1998 This vocation to eternal life is *supernatural*. It depends entirely on God's gratuitous initiative, for he alone can reveal and give himself. It surpasses the power of human intellect and will, as that of every other creature.⁴⁷

CCC 1999 The grace of Christ is the gratuitous gift that God makes to us of his own life, infused by the Holy Spirit into our soul to heal it of sin and to sanctify it. It is the *sanctifying* or *deifying grace* received in Baptism. It is in us the source of the work of sanctification. (Cf. *Jn* 4:14; 7:38-39)

Therefore if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself. (2 Cor 5:17-18)

CCC 2000 Sanctifying grace is an habitual gift, a stable and supernatural disposition that perfects the soul itself to enable it to live with God, to act by his love. *Habitual grace*, the permanent disposition to live and act in keeping with God's call, is distinguished from actual graces which refer to God's interventions, whether at the beginning of conversion or in the course of the work of sanctification.

CCC 2001 The *preparation of man* for the reception of grace is already a work of grace. This latter is needed to arouse and sustain our collaboration in justification through faith, and in sanctification through charity. God brings to completion in us what he has begun, "since he who completes his work by cooperating with our will began by working so that we might will it:" (St Augustine)

CCC 2003 Grace is first and foremost the gift of the Spirit who justifies and sanctifies us. But grace also includes the gifts that the Spirit grants us to associate us with his work, to enable us to collaborate in the salvation of others and in the growth of the Body of Christ, the Church. There are *sacramental graces*, gifts proper to the different sacraments. There are furthermore *special graces*, also called *charisms* after the Greek term used by St. Paul and meaning "favor," "gratuitous gift,"

"benefit."⁵³ Whatever their character - sometimes it is extraordinary, such as the gift of miracles or of tongues - charisms are oriented toward sanctifying grace and are intended for the common good of the Church. They are at the service of charity which builds up the Church. (Cf. *1 Cor 12*.)

CCC 2005 Since it belongs to the supernatural order, grace *escapes our experience* and cannot be known except by faith... However, according to the Lord's words "Thus you will know them by their fruits"⁵⁷ - reflection on God's blessings in our life and in the lives of the saints offers us a guarantee that grace is at work in us and spurs us on to an ever greater faith and an attitude of trustful poverty.

A pleasing illustration of this attitude is found in the reply of St. Joan of Arc to a question posed as a trap by her ecclesiastical judges: "Asked if she knew that she was in God's grace, she replied: 'If I am not, may it please God to put me in it; if I am, may it please God to keep me there.'"

CCC 2022 The divine initiative in the work of grace precedes, prepares, and elicits the free response of man. Grace responds to the deepest yearnings of human freedom, calls freedom to cooperate with it, and perfects freedom.

CCC 2023 Sanctifying grace is the gratuitous gift of his life that God makes to us; it is infused by the Holy Spirit into the soul to heal it of sin and to sanctify it.

CCC2024 Sanctifying grace makes us "pleasing to God." Charisms, special graces of the Holy Spirit, are oriented to sanctifying grace and are intended for the common good of the Church. God also acts through many actual graces, to be distinguished from habitual grace which is permanent in us.

Father Jacob's 4 Distinctions of Grace

1. Gratia gratum faciens; Grace which makes one pleasing to God vs. gratia gratis data: grace freely given, not to make the recipient pleasing to God, but to benefit the Church.

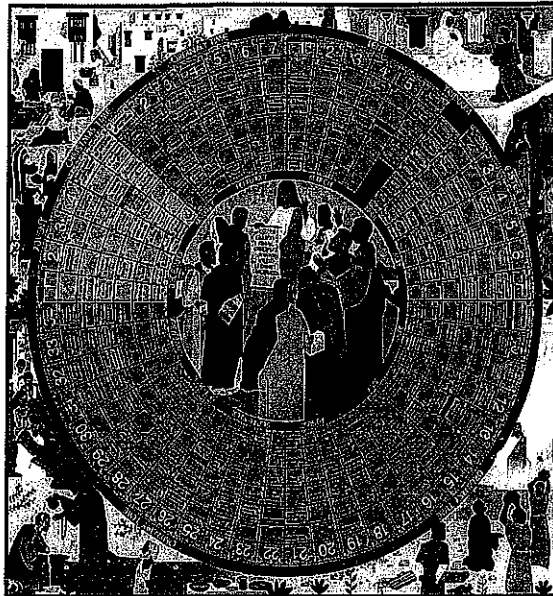
2. Operative grace is when God moves or changes us, but we are not actively moving or changing ourselves, God operates upon us. Vs. Cooperative Grace which is when God is moving us, but we are also moving ourselves in unity with him. These are distinguished in a different way in the case of conversion of the will from evil to Good. The important point for now is that sometimes God acts in us without us (operative grace) and at other times he act in us and we also, act in unity with Him because of grace.

3. Prevenient Grace vs Subsequent grace. Prevenient means "coming before" Subsequent "coming after" - these terms designate graces relative to each other in time. There are 5 basic steps in the sequence: 1) grace that heals the soul, 2) then grace moves the soul to desire what is good, 3) then grace moves the soul to accomplish what is good. 4) then grace makes the soul persevere in goodness, and 5) finally, grace glorifies the soul in Heaven.

4. Sanctifying grace is the same as Habitual Grace. We contrast sanctifying grace with Actual Grace which is the operative grace by which God makes us act. (guilty conscience makes us go to confession) Sanctifying grace is what makes us holy it is bestowed upon us at baptism and can be temporarily lost while in mortal sin. We can still do good works outside of the state of grace, but it does not yield to our sanctification. It does not make us holy but may be a prevenient grace that leads us to go to confession to reenter the state of Sanctifying or Habitual grace.

Liturgical Year - Each liturgical year consists of the cycle of liturgical seasons in Christian Churches that determines when feast days are to be observed, and which portions of Scriptures are to be read in an annual cycle or in a cycle of several years.

Advent - (Purple) The beginning of the Liturgical year. A season of spiritual preparation for Christmas. It focuses on the first and second comings of Christ. The word Advent means "coming". Advent begins Four Sundays prior to December 25th each year. The colors of Advent are Purple and Rose/Pink. Rose is worn on *Gaudete* Sunday (3rd Sunday in Advent). A time to "Rejoice".



It is proper and good to prepare one's soul for Christmas by celebrating the Sacrament of Penance during Advent.

Christmas (White and Gold) A joyful season celebrating the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ. Christmas = Mass of Christ. Christmas always begins on December 25th and ends with the Feast of Epiphany. The Feast of the **Holy Family** and the Feast of **Mary Mother of God** are important Holy Days kept during this season. Christmas Colors are White and Gold.

Epiphany (White and Gold) Celebration of the Magi arriving to Adore the Savior, and present gifts of Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh. Epiphany means "manifestation or showing forth". Jesus was revealed to Magi (non-Jews).

Winter Ordinary Time (Green) The readings focus on the ministry and teaching of Jesus on various topics. The color is Green to show that we are growing in faith and holiness.

Ash Wednesday and Lent (Purple) Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the penitential season of Lent. This season prepares us for the celebration of the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Christ. Ash Wednesday is always 46 days before Easter Sunday. Lent is a season of 40 days of prayer, fasting/discipline and charity/almsgiving. The 6 Sundays during Lent are not kept as days of Penance as Sundays celebrate the Resurrection. The 4th Sunday during Lent is *Laetare* Sunday (Rose Vestments worn). Every Catholic should make every effort to celebrate the Sacrament of Confession during this season as well as some form of penance and acts of charity. Ash Wednesday is a day of Fasting and Abstinence. The Gloria and Alleluia are not used during this season.

Holy Week and the Easter Triduum - The Crown of the Liturgical Year begins with Palm Sunday which is the Sunday prior to Easter. Palm Sunday recalls Jesus entrance into Jerusalem for the Passion. Red Vestments are worn, and Palm branches are blessed.

The **Easter Triduum** begins the evening of **Holy Thursday** which commemorates the Holy Eucharist and the Priesthood. A foot washing ceremony takes place and the Mass is followed by a procession of the Blessed Sacrament from the Main altar to a special altar or chapel for a time of watching and praying as the disciples were supposed to do in the Garden of Gethsemane. (White)

Good Friday Recalls the Crucifixion of our Lord. No Mass is celebrated, rather a beautiful and solemn liturgy focusing on the great sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross. Veneration of the Cross. (Red)

Holy Saturday is a quiet day recalling Christ's time in the tomb.

Easter Vigil – The most important Liturgy of the Christian year! It begins at Sundown outside with the lighting of the Paschal Candle. Symbol of the Resurrected Christ. The Exultet is sung in honor of the Candle. Several (up to 7 readings) recalling the history of God's saving plan are read. The Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation are celebrated and separated Christians are received into full communion with the Church. This is followed by the first Mass of Easter. (White/Gold)

The Easter Season – Begins with Easter Vigil and lasts for 50 days! (Easter Octave solemnities each day until Divine Mercy Sunday). It is a time of feasting and celebrating the truth of the Resurrection of Jesus from the grave.

The Ascension – 40 days after Easter Sunday, always celebrates Jesus Ascension into heaven. (White)

Pentecost - Easter ends with the celebration of the descent of the Holy Spirit upon Mary and the Apostles at Pentecost. (Red)

Ordinary Time – Pentecost is followed by a very long season of growth in the Christian life. It continues until Advent begins. The last Sunday in this season celebrates Christ the King.

Trinity Sunday – Celebrates the Holy Trinity on Sunday following Pentecost.

Corpus Christi – Celebrates the mystery of the Body and Blood of Jesus made present in the Eucharist. Sunday after Trinity Sunday.

Christ the King – This Solemnity is kept on the last Sunday of the Liturgical Year and honors Christ as sovereign Lord of the Universe.

Holy Days of Obligation – days celebrating events and persons of the Christian faith that are Universal in significance. Every Catholic is obliged to participate in the Eucharist/Mass on these days. Willingly failing to do so is a serious sin.

Every Sunday of the Year

Christmas

December 25th

Mary Mother of God

January 1

Ascension Thursday

40th day after Easter, in US transferred to Following Sunday

Assumption of Mary

August 15th

All Saints

November 1

Immaculate Conception of Mary

December 8 unless it falls on Sunday then (December 9th)

Why does Easter have a different date each year? The date for Easter is determined by the date of the first Sunday after the first full moon following the vernal equinox (a.k.a. first day of spring; around March 20)

Extremely Valuable Table on Grace | Salvation in Early Modern Theology

	Calvinists (not Catholic)	Jansenists (bad Catholics)	Thomists (Catholics, mostly Dominicans)	Molinists (Catholics, mostly Jesuits)	Pelagians (extinct; not Catholic)
What is the moral condition of fallen humanity?	T otal depravity: everything we do is sinful; we have no merit.	Depraved: fallen man is strongly inclined to sin	Depraved: fallen man is strongly inclined to sin	Depraved: fallen man is strongly inclined to sin	Humanity remains morally intact, and can follow the commandments at will.
Why does God elect some people for eternal life?	U nconditional election: God chooses on the basis of His own goodness, not of our foreknown merits.	Unconditional election: God chooses on the basis of His own goodness, not of our foreknown merits.	Unconditional election: God chooses on the basis of His own goodness, not of our foreknown merits.	The main Molinists teach unconditional election: God chooses on the basis of His own goodness, not of our foreknown merits.	God elects those He knows will deserve heaven. Predestination does not <i>cause</i> us to do good.
For whom did Christ die?	L imited atonement: Christ died for the elect only, not for all.	Limited atonement: Christ died for the elect only, not for all.	Christ died for all, but not all receive the effects of His Passion.	Christ died for all, but not all receive the effects of His Passion.	Christ died as an example to all, not to make atonement.
Can we ever resist God's grace?	I rresistible grace: the human will can never resist any impulse of grace.	Irresistible grace.	Some grace (not every kind) is intrinsically efficacious, and therefore irresistible.	Grace is never irresistible.	Grace is never irresistible.
Who is going to heaven?	P erseverance of the elect: those with true faith are the elect, who will all be saved in the end. It is possible to know whether one is saved.	The elect go to heaven. But unless you receive a private revelation from God, you cannot know if you are one of the elect.	The elect go to heaven. But unless you receive a private revelation from God, you cannot know if you are one of the elect.	The elect go to heaven. But unless you receive a private revelation from God, you cannot know if you are one of the elect.	Anyone who fulfills the moral law goes to heaven.
Why do people cooperate with grace?	Grace causes cooperation.	Grace causes cooperation.	Grace causes cooperation.	Grace does not cause cooperation; grace is a kind of help.	"Grace"? What's that, other than God's kindness?

Solemnities of the Liturgical Year

A Solemnity is the highest rank of the various holy days observed by the Catholic Church.
Here is a list of the Solemnities of the Church.

The Easter Triduum

The Triduum includes Holy Thursday, Good Friday, the Easter Vigil & Easter Sunday,
The date changes yearly.

The Nativity of Jesus², December 25

Every Sunday of the Year, Sunday is the original holy day

Mary, Mother of God¹, January 1

Epiphany of the Lord, January 6 or the nearest Sunday

St. Joseph, March 19

The Annunciation of the Lord, March 25

Ascension, 40 days after Easter or the Sunday following the 40th day

Holy Trinity Sunday, Date changes yearly

Corpus Christi, Thursday after Trinity or Sunday after Trinity

Sacred Heart of Jesus, The Friday after Corpus Christi Sunday

Birth of John the Baptist, June 24

Peter & Paul, Apostles, June 29

Assumption of Mary¹, August 15

All Saints¹, November 1

Christ the King, Last Sunday in Ordinary Time

Immaculate Conception of Mary², December 8

¹ A Holy Day of Obligation to attend Mass. The obligation is suspended when this Holy Day falls on a Saturday or a Monday.

² A Holy Day of Obligation to attend Mass no matter what day it falls on.