

### THE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

“After this I had a vision of a great multitude, which no one could count, from every race, nation, people and tongue...standing before the Lamb...crying out: ‘Salvation comes from our God.’”

(Rev. 7: 9ff)

In the Apostle’s Creed and in our Easter Renewal of our Baptismal Promises, we profess: I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy, catholic church, the communion of saints...” Yes, we profess our faith in the communion of saints. Many Catholics would hear those words and think that the saints were all those holy people who were martyred for their faith or who lived heroic lives in convents or monasteries. For most Catholics, a saint is a holy person. Immediately after thinking that there is an unspoken thought that goes like this: “And I am definitely not one of those.”

Ask yourself this question: Do you think you know what holiness looks like when you see it? Have you ever seen it in a particular person? Have you ever met someone and after meeting them left with the impression that that person is really a holy person? Sometimes we have experiences like that. Another question: Do you think that God has outfitted you for holiness? Do you think that you could become a saint? I’m not talking about ever being canonized as a saint. I am talking about being a saint, being a holy person. Do you think that God has outfitted you for that? For sanctity? For holiness? Do you think God wants you to be a saint? Wants you to be holy? Do you believe that with God’s help you actually could become a holy person?

Do you think rather in terms of being a good person, or a person of courage, or a person of integrity? Integrity, goodness, courage are all attainable realities, we think. But holiness? Not by me. But why not? I mean, why not? Holiness isn’t something that you can attain by doing all manner of good things. Holiness is something that God gives to you. Will you let Him? If God wants to give you the grace to make you holy, will you let Him? Years ago, in a quiet moment in the Rectory Chapel, I heard these words: “Stephen, do not be afraid, to be holy.” I took them as coming right from God. Who else talks like that? Who else says that? It was something very real for me. I cannot possibly attain holiness on my own or by myself but that isn’t what holiness is. It is a gift that the Lord bestows and it has a real effect on you. Will you let him do that for you? That is the question for this week.