

Grace

Beloved person,

Would a gentle question increase the possibility of a gentler answer? I think so, because the reverse – if you replace gentle with hard, tough, or strict – is often true as well. Which gentle questions would be relevant right now for where you are? And which gentle questions do you hope to receive yourself?

A few weeks ago, I heard someone on the radio ask: Can you explain to me what grace is? Her question expressed curiosity. She said she didn't really know what it was, but that she thought it was such a beautiful word. It stuck with me because experiences for which there is no longer a language could fade into the background and perhaps even disappear altogether. For me, grace is an important concept because it is strongly connected to my Apostolic nature and my religious feeling. I cherish its value and meaning, and I hope that we preserve and continue to use it both in our Apostolic Society and in the wider community. That is why I would like to write about it in this letter.

Grace is the feeling that something good has happened to you.
It is not your merit. You did not work hard for it or put in your best effort. And even if you did work very hard for it, you experience it as a miracle, a blessing, or something special that this is happening to you.

Grace is the experience that you are a blessed person.
That feeling flows through you, allowing you to let go in that moment of perhaps falling short, of things you're ashamed of, or of sometimes thinking you are not good enough.

It is grace when you feel supported and secure.
There is so much going on. You might be deeply worried or sad. And yet, that does not prevent you from trusting that things will turn out okay.

It is grace when you can wholeheartedly embrace life's invitation to be who you are.

You are a gifted person if you can find these glasses again and again, polish their lenses, and put them on.

Words can never express exactly how you can feel uplifted, touched, or protected by a feeling of grace. We don't set our thoughts about it in stone, because we don't believe it will make things better. There is value and beauty in embracing this beautiful concept again and again.

*There is a stream so mighty,
that carries you through,
a stream that will heal you
way down to your roots.
A stream which will carry you
and take you far beyond your dreams,
a flow which through all things
So endlessly streams.
It will not freeze over,
no matter how cold.
It springs from a rich source:
the rich source of your soul.¹*

With a warm-hearted greeting, gladly your sister

Nanda Ziere



We honour those who have gone before us and comfort those who need it

¹ Marcel Heerink, *There is a stream*, choir song no. 10