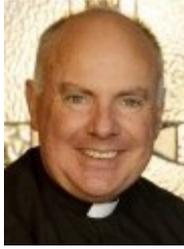


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In an earlier [article](#) (22 October 2013) I talked about being perfect as a process rather than a product. We grow in holiness and so we grow towards God day by day as we live our Christian lives and we live in the power of the faith God gives us.

We grow in holiness through prayer, through the reading of the Scriptures and through the grace of the sacraments. In baptism we are made one with Christ in his death. As we read the Scriptures we hear the words of Jesus speaking to us in particular situation and we know Jesus' presence with us. As we gather together to worship God Christ is with us, blessing, feeding, guiding and encouraging. As we receive the Eucharist we receive the body and blood of Christ as food for our Christian journey.

Jesus comes and touches us with his very self and we are graced to live in holiness of life. This is always movement towards since in this earthly life we do not reach the full perfection of the kingdom of heaven which will come at the end of time.

Living a Christian life is about being formed into the image of Christ. We each respond to the call of God in our lives and we live those lives seeking to conform to Christ's image as a Christian vocation. Formation is a subtle but progressive journey in which we can be led by both the heart and the head.

We must be open to Christ and his call and this can make us vulnerable as we seek to follow our Christian vocation. God can call us to do things we never thought we could do and other people can request and demand things of us. We are sometimes full of doubt and sometimes we fail.

Even Christ had his moments of doubt in the Garden of Gethsemane. Risking vulnerability is part of the price we pay for love. We must however be open to the possibilities and know that we can grow, we can strain towards perfection, even if we never make it in a final sense in this life. We must seek for Godly wisdom through living our life of faith as we are fed by word and sacrament and as we move forward with our eyes fixed on Jesus who is the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.

As we move towards holiness it may be helpful to think about two dimensions of our vocation and calling – being and doing.

Being is the more contemplative and reflective dimension where we take the time to worship God and sit in the presence of God and the Scriptures or where we spend time in prayer and meditation. This takes discipline since we have to allow us the time to be still and know God but we are called to be just as much as we are called to do. As we open ourselves to God we come to know more of God's love and plan for us.

Doing involves the more practical tasks of ministry. We often quickly find the time to do these things and we become very busy with important matters, sometimes even consumed by them. There is the danger however that the doing overshadows the being and they are not held in balance.

Worship of God is our primary duty as Christian people. It is not that God is in need of our worship. It is however that we need to be in the presence of God and give God our worship. We worship God first and then go on to do all those so-important tasks of ministry.

If we seek holiness and if we seek to strain towards perfection then our being and doing need to be in balance. We do need to make time to be in the presence of God and lay ourselves open, reflecting on our journey with God and others, just as much as we need to be doing the practical tasks of ministry.

By Archdeacon **Brian Douglas**