

Meditations for Quiet Moments

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Dedicated
to the
Sacred Heart of Jesus
and the
Immaculate Heart of Mary

TABLE OF CONTENTS

God's Will - Human Will	5
God's Relationship with People	7
Our Relationship with God	11
Our Relationship with Ourself	14
Our Relationship with Others	17
Spirituality	20
Prayer	23
Penance	25
Pride	26
Sin	29
The Devil	33
Time and Eternity	35
Death	37
Purgatory and Hell	39
Heaven	41
Imitation of Christ	44
Imitation of Mary	47
The Catholic Church	49
Saints	54
Devotions	57
Carrying Your Cross	58
Peace of Mind - Peace of Soul	61
Life on Earth	63
Human Relations	68
Love	72
Marriage	74
Parenting	78
The Family	81
Teaching and Learning	83
Human Nature	85
Pride	87
Materialism	90
Modern Day Living	92
Common Sense	96
Practical Wisdom	100
Being Human	103
Offer It Up	106
Retreats and Reinforcement	108
Think About It	110
The Spiritual Life	113

FOREWORD

Regardless of lifestyle, everyone is always searching for a little "peace and quiet." In actuality, that should be expressed "quiet and peace", because quiet not only precedes peace, but is usually a prerequisite of it. We live in a society, however, in which "quiet" almost seems to be a forbidden concept, and "peace" an almost unattainable objective.

In the modern world, there are two things that tend to negate the attainment of these twin goals. The first is the busyness that everyone is involved with as a result of simply trying to manage one's daily responsibilities. There are so many details that are part of one's life outside of work, as well as those involved with work itself. There are few individuals whose work does not intrude into their private lives.

This amount of physical busyness is only superseded by the amount of mental busyness. There is often a mental preoccupation of work which connects the last physical work accomplished with the next project ahead. This concept of modern living may be primarily what is the main reason for the dominance of television as the non-work activity of choice. Television requires little concentration and no participation. This ever-present spoon-fed entertainment has probably been the main reason that reading is not a popular pastime for either adults or children. Even when the television is off, the odds are high that a radio or CD player is on. Again, what kind of sound is present is not as important as the fact that silence is eliminated.

Reading, however, is an active activity in that it engages the mind in mental processes. While reading can always be simply for entertainment, there is also reading which encourages, or even necessitates, the thinking process. This requirement may be one of the reasons as to why reading has lost popularity with many adults as well as children. Reading for spiritual edification and meditation is an activity that has to be probably scheduled on a regular basis. If one waits until there is extra time, or nothing else to do, that time may never come.

Spiritual "thinking" is called "meditation." While it can technically be done any place or any time, the place will normally be one in which there are few or no worldly distractions, and where there is either silence or non-distracting sounds. One's home may or may not qualify as a good place because of the presence of other people or activities. An ideal place, of course, is the inside of a church or chapel, especially when one is alone there.

Another place is a retreat house during a religious retreat, especially one in which silence is the norm. It is a time of complete physical and mental relaxation, with the result of allowing an easy access to the spiritual. One can still find some quiet and peace to accomplish that in this world. It may take more effort, however, and often going a greater distance in order to find it. Everyone should make time - not "find time" to talk to God - and to listen to Him in

return.

The following book of thoughts were written over the course of 15 years on retreats at monasteries and retreat houses. They were written down primarily as a record of personal thoughts and ideas, which could then be brought back home and used for later meditations. They are offered here for possibly serving the same purpose for others. It is filled with "thought-starters," - to lead readers to their own meditations - ones which will have a great meaning to them, and the some with the most value.

GOD'S WILL - HUMAN WILL

If you rebel at first to do God's Will, be wise enough to recognize that tendency as a wrong, and then set out to do what is right.

* * *

God's Will for you has been expressed as doing the best you can at the time - and then not looking back. It can also mean not looking ahead either.

* * *

Our yoke in life is our responsibilities; our burden is our cross to bear.

* * *

Could you have lived 100 years ago? No. God could have put your Soul in a different body 100 years ago, but the result would not have been the same. You may not like living when you do, but accept that also as God's Will. Then further God's Will by living your daily life using the talents of Soul, mind, and body which you have been given.

* * *

Our yoke is easy and our burden is light only when we spiritualize them. It is only when we really mean, "Let thy will, not mine, be done," that we come to accept this life. and our part in it, as a mystery - and a satisfaction of God's Will.

* * *

Do you spend all your time hurdling obstacles instead of removing them? To be close to God you must first remove the barriers that you yourself have placed there. Then and only then can you find out what God's Will is for you. Then you must follow it - no matter how much it differs from your own will.

* * *

If you have to wonder if you are doing the Will of God or not, you are not - at least not in the fullest sense.

* * *

Do God's Will first - and then you can do your will.

* * *

Whether one has one talent or ten talents is a matter of God's Will. How you use them in serving God, with assistance of God's grace, is a matter of your Free Will.

* * *

The allure of worldliness is not a denial of God as much as a flight from Him. The refusal of total obedience to God is like refusing a medicine for a sickness that will not go away. Even if we know that this medicine may cure us, we are afraid of its bitter taste. Only in finally humbling ourself to take it, do we find that it is sweet, rather than bitter.

* * *

An example of God's "Directive Will" in your everyday life is having a good thought, or idea, or intention. Whether or not you use it, or act upon it, is an example of a human's Free Will.

* * *

Our level of Pride determines the length of time that we avoid the medicine to cure it. If we choose to reinforce this Pride, rather than use our Free Will to work at attaining the virtue of Humility, through Obedience, we can live our entire life without this everlasting life-giving medicine. This is the primary choice of our Free Will.

* * *

Without Free Will, a person cannot love. Without aligning your Free Will to God's Will, a person cannot truly love either God or anyone else.

GOD'S RELATIONSHIP WITH PEOPLE

God deals us each a hand, and we must play with the one we get.

* * *

God shows he loves us by giving us earthly life, and the chance for an eternal life in Heaven.

* * *

It is true that Christ is always waiting for us with open arms. That does not mean that when we go to Him, He will always give us the consolation of a hug.

* * *

We can not understand God's reasoning. That is why we do not understand the parable about the person who works one hour and gets a full day's wages. To humans, using human reasoning, it is unfair. A finite mind (human beings) will never understand an infinite mind (God's).

* * *

How long do you plan to make God wait before you give Him a chance to forgive you?

* * *

What God expects of us is much more than what we expect of ourselves. Otherwise, we would be guilty of presumption.

* * *

God knows every sin we have committed and He still loves us. That love, however, will not keep Him from punishing us if we do not turn away from a life of sin.

* * *

Life is really simple and uncomplicated. It only becomes complicated and misunderstood when we look to the world, rather than God, for our reason and purpose for daily existence.

* * *

It must be realized that one cannot simply give the solution to life's problems to anyone else, just as it could not simply be given to us. To know something is one thing; to practice it is another; to have practiced it enough to fully realize it and understand it, is still another.

After the third step is accomplished, then and only then does God give you enough grace to not have to fight yourself and the world on an hour-to-hour, or day-to-day basis.

God never takes over completely, but He helps your mountains seem bigger and your valleys seem smaller.

* * *

God lives within every heart - even the ones which deny Him.

* * *

Sometimes even the best of intentions go awry; Look at God's

intentions when He made Adam and Eve.

* * *

It is true that God loves you unconditionally. However, that love alone will not get you to Heaven. It only makes it possible.

* * *

The punishment that has been predicted as coming to the world will serve two purposes: 1) punish the world for sin, and 2) cause people to turn back to God.

* * *

You are living now because God wants you to live now.

* * *

Because parents love their children, they punish them if they give them rules to obey to protect them from harm that the children cannot imagine or understand. God does the same with us.

* * *

"Give children love unconditionally, and accept them totally as they are." If parents did that, they would never encourage their children to be any better.

It is the same with the statement, "God loves you as you are, without any change." If that were totally true, there would be no reason for any effort to improve ourselves, eliminate our sins, correct our faults, or become more charitable. Is that what Christ demanded? What about the young man who rejected Christ's suggestion to sell all he had, give to the poor, and follow Him? He did not say, "Sell half of what you have and come follow me." He did not say, "Just keep doing what you're doing now. I love you as you are and there's no need to change." When Christ forgave sins, it was not, "I forgive your sins. You do not have to change." He did say, "Go out and sin no more."

* * *

God does loves you as you are, but he does not want you to stay on that level. If you had a migraine headache, do you tell yourself, "I am almost a completely healthy person? There is nothing wrong with my neck, my back, my arms, my stomach, my legs or my feet." Because you hurt in only one area, we still have a tendency to concentrate on what is not well.

* * *

God has a purpose for me here and now. The work He wants me to do only I can do. and now is the time He has chosen me to do it.

* * *

God may know that we are partly healthy, or even mostly healthy, but He wants us to be all healthy. He, therefore, spends more time concentrating on driving our remaining sins and faults out, not patting us on the back for the little or even mostly good that we are. This is why good people still are put through tests and trials.) If God

was not satisfied with the great Saints, do you really think He is satisfied with us?

* * *

Each Soul is unique. God did not join just any Soul with my body at the moment of my conception. He gave me a particular Soul. This Soul has certain characteristics or traits which God gave to me for a reason - and that reason always involves serving Him.

* * *

God gives us all we truly need - not all we think we need.

* * *

God certainly has patience and tolerance, with Him still putting up with the human race as it is today. His patience and tolerance is wearing thin, though, and the results will not be pleasant.

OUR RELATIONSHIP TO GOD

If you know God, you will love Him, if you love Him, you will serve Him.

* * *

Many people talk to God every day. Unfortunately, most of the time it is to complain.

* * *

If we are loaned something, then we must use it according to the wishes of the lender. God has given us all of creation and it is all good, but we must use it according to His wishes.

* * *

If you do not have time for God now, He may not have time for you later.

* * *

Before we can have respect for life, we must have respect for the God who created it.

* * *

Our total dependence on God starts by releasing ourself from ambition, then optimism, and then natural Hope.

* * *

The calendar proclaims Sunday as The Lord's Day. Our thoughts, words and actions should proclaim every day as such.

* * *

If there was no God and no laws made by Him., there could be no such thing as a guilty conscience.

* * *

There are many people who know what God expects of them. They just need to accomplish it to a higher degree. At times, that becomes a very difficult "just."

* * *

The more we use God - the less we use people.

* * *

Most people say they believe in God, and some of them spend an hour a week in a church with Him. The majority of both groups however, rarely makes knowing, loving, and serving God, a part of their daily lives.

* * *

To do less of God's work in order to please people, would be to lose your integrity as well as grace.

* * *

Your way to God may be a good way - but it is not the only way.

* * *

Of primary importance is our relationship to God. Of next importance is our relationship to others.

* * *

We are supposed to thank God for what we have. Not just complain about what we want.

* * *

Many teenagers and young adults who are attempting to "find" themselves will never do so, because they are trying to find their essence and purpose within themselves. Their essence comes from God and their purpose must lead back to Him, or they will never "find" themselves. You can never find something until you look in the right places.

* * *

We were formerly taught that we are made into the image and likeness of God. Now it is more popular to believe God is made in the image and likeness of ourselves.

* * *

Making a place and setting aside time for silence meditation, is one of the best gifts that you can give to yourself.

* * *

You should not smile just because you know "Jesus loves you". You should smile when you know you love Jesus enough.

* * *

To disagree with modern psychologists, all right-thinking does not start with a good self-image. It starts with God's image. Our world should resolve around God - not ourselves.

* * *

We should often ask ourselves: Would God bless this book or magazine I am about to read, the movie I am about to see, the song I am about to hear, the thought I am about to think, the words I am about to say, the clothes I am about to wear, or the actions I am about to do.

* * *

Concern yourself with God's opinion of you - and no one else's.

* * *

The silence in meditation is not just to avoid noise and hassle; it is to let God talk to you, and while He can certainly speak to you when the radio or television is on, you are not in a position to listen.

* * *

To believe without understanding is not only an example of Faith - it is also an example of Humility.

OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH OURSELF

Never expect too much of yourself. You should only do as much as you can do while retaining peace of mind.

Do not start off your morning with, "Give us this day our daily gripe."

* * *

Learn to leave the "Why's" of God to the theologians. You have enough trouble with the "Why's" of yourself.

* * *

Even if you do not have a strong will, strengthen your motives over a period of time and you will develop a strong will.

* * *

Much of the secret of happiness in this world depends not upon striving what we are not - but in accepting what we are.

* * *

A sign of the beginning of maturity is to know and admit that you are not mature yet.

* * *

The virtue of tolerance must start with ourselves. If we are not tolerant of others, it may be because we are not tolerant with ourselves.

* * *

Pleasing God is the goal of the spiritual person. Pleasing oneself is the goal of the self-centered person.

* * *

The only people who are completely lonely are the ones who does not enjoy their own company.

* * *

A clear conscience about a matter does not bring happiness, only a lack of perpetual, personal self-kicking.

* * *

People who need love must have it to function on any higher level than existence. Only a totally egotistical person can really accomplish something with only self-satisfaction, or Pride, as his goal and reward.

* * *

When things bother us, it is because our thoughts are on ourselves.

* * *

To be alone when one desires to be alone is a welcome event. To be alone when one does not desire it, is not welcome.

* * *

We know that God forgives our past sins. We have to learn how to forgive ourselves of our past mistakes.

* * *

It is interesting how we remember bad times, or hurts, or rejections as if they happened yesterday. Our good memories are like movies which we saw a long time ago.

* * *

In one way, people are like flowers; they open and close depending on outside influences - but do not change their basic nature. A daisy that wilts is still a daisy.

* * *

People who cannot be what they are by nature, are like flowers whose pedals are broken off just as it starts to open up. A life frustrated is worse than a flower that is wilting, because flowers automatically grow again every year. When a flower dies, the world loses something replaceable. When a person dies inside, they he cannot be replaced.

* * *

People talk to themselves, either because they are crazy, or to reinforce what they are thinking or deciding. Everyone is allowed to believe the second reason for themselves.

* * *

You are more of your real self when you are alone. At this time you can either feel close to God, or far from Him. The latter starts from self-pity, leads into depression and can end in despair.

* * *

As soon as you are fully awake in the morning, commit yourself to resist a specific sinful course of action, or improve a character defect.

* * *

There is a large gap between being a lot smart and a little wise.

OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHERS

We spend millions and millions of dollars in order to try to discover life on another planet, while ignoring the plight of half of the human life on this planet.

* * *

Do not attempt to help a person who has not asked God for help first. Only then can you be God's instrument of help to that person.

* * *

Without Faith in God, one cannot have true Charity. It is not Charity if it is for convenience, if it is self-seeking, or if it is easy. If being charitable is difficult or takes a sacrifice, then it can be rightfully called Charity.

* * *

There are things that only you can do to bring others to Christ. If you do not do it, it does not get done. No one can make up for your omissions.

* * *

One should get spiritually involved with another's problems without becoming personally involved. Do not make their problem, your problem. Let your only problem be helping them find and use the solution to their problem.

* * *

Your best friend is one who tells you the truth about yourself, knowing it may hurt at first.

* * *

It is not up to the individual soldier to win the entire battle or the entire war. His basic responsibility is to keep himself from being killed by the enemy while doing his duty. If he can aid others with less skills, and maybe less courage, then that is good also. If you save another's life, you may also be saving your own. It is the same with being a soldier of Christ and the saving of Souls.

* * *

We should show much tolerance for another's idiosyncrasies, but no tolerance for another's Mortal Sins.

* * *

Search for a life somewhere between doing too much and doing too little. Look for the middle ground between, "Everything is my responsibility," and "Nothing is my responsibility."

* * *

Prescribing a cure for someone is much better than simply giving them a pain-reliever, which only masks the real problem.

* * *

It is hard to be totally wrong; it is hard to be totally right. We all fall somewhere in between the two. One fault in our nature is that we are always looking back and comparing ourselves to the sinners below us, instead of the Saints above us.

* * *

Try - at least try - to forget about human approval for awhile.

* * *

Saving someone from a savage animal in a cave can be accomplished by searching for him in it with a light. It is better to simply warn people not to go in.

* * *

The people with one talent probably think that the people with ten talents are lucky. Unfortunately, with every talent there is a corresponding responsibility. Those talents must be used, not buried, or there is grave consequences.

* * *

Another thing to consider is that the more the talents and responsibilities, the harder it is to simplify your life. Also, the more the talents, the greater the difficulty we have in recognizing God's Will in our use of them. It is an understanding of this concept which probably prompted the saying, "Ignorance is bliss."

* * *

As long as you have food, clothes, and shelter, do not be jealous because someone else has more expensive food, more stylish clothing or a bigger house.

* * *

It may very well be a boring world if everyone was the same. However, while we should not object to people's different looks, shapes, accents, races, tastes, personalities and temperament, we should object to evil people - in their sins, and also their attempts to pass their sins onto us and others.

* * *

Example of a sin of the tongue: Saying something that does not need to be said, to someone who does not need to hear it.

* * *

Each of us is a very small, but very important wheel in the machinery of God's Plan.

* * *

The grease that is applied to our own wheel is the grace from God which we must ask and work for. Our grease must necessarily be rubbed off on other wheels. A small wheel with much grease does God's work better than a large wheel with little or no grease. Let us be satisfied with being small wheels with an abundance of grease.

* * *

Everyone takes interest in everyone else's life. It is more important that we take an interest in everyone else's Soul.

* * *

The public often knows when you save a life. Only God knows when you save a Soul.

SPIRITUALITY

You only gain grace at times of temptation. You do not gain grace for not sinning when you are not tempted.

* * *

Humility brings out the best in a person, and in a way, also the worst - the realization of what one really is.

* * *

Spiritual dryness sometimes comes, not because you are doing anything wrong, but because you are not doing enough right. The fruits of grace are not growing simply because they are not being watered enough.

* * *

Personal thoughts hit home personally. Everyone who wants to have a better spiritual life should write his own thoughts down.

* * *

Humility is admitting what we are, and what we are not, in whatever proportion is true for each one of us as an individual.

* * *

The saying "The more things change, the more they stay the same" only refers to the human side of life. The divine side, the condition of the Soul, is always changing - either for better or for worse.

* * *

Spiritual dryness is getting thrown off the bucking horse of Spirituality, and there is always soreness that follows. If you are a true cowboy, you get back on the horse; if you are a true Catholic, you get back on the bucking horse of Spirituality. Those who only call themselves "Christian" never get on the bucking horse the first time. They prefer the easy, smoother ride of a buckboard. Unfortunately, it takes the roughest and toughest ride to control your fallen human nature and inordinate drives and appetites.

The four D's Discouragement, Disappointment, Disillusionment, and Despair, can be corrected by the four P's Prayer, Penance, Prudence, and Patience.

* * *

There is a fine line sometimes, between having a high conscience, and being scrupulous.

* * *

To be physically fit, you build a good background of strength and endurance, and then you work on power and speed. You work very hard and there are some short-term benefits. So you work harder and you may see more benefits. Inevitably, there is a time of no obvious improvement and it is easy to get discouraged. What is necessary is to continue training, as it will pay off in the long run. "Getting in shape" does not work on perfect increments. It also does not work on a dispensing machine scale. "You put so much in and get

so much out." If you keep working past the level stage, however, you will reach a higher peak. The hardest thing is to actually get physically fit. It is easier to keep a state of fitness than to attain it.

Getting spiritually fit should follow the same pattern of getting physically fit. One starts off weak and then begins training. This training should start off slowly so as not to do too much too soon. That way is better, because you will not quit because it is too hard, too soon. This brings to mind the idealist teenagers who, without a strong spiritual background, go out to save the world from pollution, poverty, disease, racism, prejudice and everything else. They stay very busy for a while, but when the enthusiasm goes - everything goes. They are not only no better off than before, but are usually worse off. Often, the years lost in the formation of youth sometimes are never made up.

* * *

Children take to spiritual ideals easily. It is usually after puberty, when interest turn to the opposite sex, cars, recreation, social activities, money, and vanity, that spiritual training takes a tumble.

* * *

Spiritual fitness can only be maintained through reinforcement; the more the reinforcement, the easier to maintain it. This is what Christ meant when he said, "Take up thy cross and follow me," and also, "My burden is easy and my yoke light." When you carry your cross in accordance with God's Will - instead of rejection of it by your own - you will know what spiritual fitness is.

* * *

If you're melancholy, you can work at being holy.

PRAYER

Resignation to God's Will should always be your first prayer.

* * *

Pray at least 24 minutes a day - one for each hour you live. You are giving God back in prayer one-sixtieth of the time He gives you. Is that too much?

* * *

The most unfortunate people in the world are those who do not know how to pray. The most miserable are those who know how to pray - and refuse to.

* * *

You can pray in any position; lying down, sitting, standing, kneeling. Beginners and intermediates in prayer should start the same way as babies starting to move forward - on their knees.

* * *

We may not pray better during mental or physical distress, but we certainly pray more.

* * *

It is easier to pray when you are afraid. "Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."

* * *

Your whole life can be a life of prayer even if you do not live the life of a monk or a cloistered nun.

* * *

Exercise can be a physical prayer if you offer it up to God.

* * *

There is a popular saying, "He who sings prays twice." This may be true, but only if what is sung - and how it is sung - is meant to please God, and not simply to entertain ourselves.

* * *

Prayer may more often be spontaneous rather than formal during mental or physical distress. During these times we do not have to remind ourselves to pray. We do it then, not for the long range effects on our Soul, but from the immediate benefit of seeking help and consolation.

* * *

Every minute spent in prayer may take away an hour of Purgatory.

* * *

You can be with someone and feel alone, or be a thousand miles away from someone and feel secure. God is in another world, but is still only a prayer away.

* * *

To suffer with the right intention is the best and most perfect prayer there is.

* * *

Your last prayer to God at night should be "Let Thy Will, not mine, be done."

PENANCE

The sinner who would remain a sinner says only, "Give me this day my daily bread." The sinner who would become a Saint adds, "Give me this day my daily penance.

* * *

Mortification of the senses does not just involve the five senses. It also involves keeping the mouth shut more often.

* * *

Sacrifices and penances are like pieces of coal, in that few people want to touch them. They turn into diamonds, however, on Judgement Day.

* * *

Penance is the exact opposite of sin. Sin is often doing what we like, and what is not good for us. Penance is doing what we do not like, but which is good for us. The more sins we commit, the less we are drawn to penance.

* * *

A condemned man's last meal is usually lavish and he really feasts. Would it not be better if he fasted, and ended his life on a sacrificial note?

* * *

Once you back off from materialism and the world, you can more easily find God and give Him his rightful place in your life. It is the same with doing penance to control excessive desires of physical drives.

* * *

Our Lady of Fatima said that the penance that God wants from us today is the doing of our daily duties as best we can. Doing your daily duty today is not a simple thing. It is more complicated than it ever has been in the history of mankind.

* * *

To offer up our daily duty, and to follow through what we must necessarily do in those duties, is both a penance and a means to gain grace.

PRIDE

There is no one blinder than those who will not see.

* * *

Most people do not want to know where they are wrong, because they would have to change, and Pride keeps them from realizing that the change is the answer to their problems.

* * *

The capital sin of Pride is not so much wanting others to think well of me, as my wanting me to think well of me. The essence of ego is my opinion of myself, which then leads to being concerned with other's opinions of me. The beginning of humility is my only being concerned with God's opinion.

* * *

When you think of past sins of Pride, be ashamed of the large ones, and laugh at yourself for the small ones.

* * *

Some people put on a big outward show of their Christianity, but do not have it interiorly. They do not work at becoming closer to God to do His Will, but they throw the name of His Son around like a name-dropper. This is like the beautifully polished hot rod with plenty of dazzling chrome and ornaments but with no engine, or one with few pistons firing. They would be indignant if you said the car was not serving a purpose other than being an attractive display. These people miss the whole point in being devout.

* * *

God, grant me enough consolation to continue to do Your work, but not so much as to continue to do Your work in Pride.

* * *

It is even possible to be prideful by saying "I am a sinner."

* * *

The correct order of love is supposed to be: Love God - love yourself - love others. Modern psychologists want you to love yourself first - the only way to the capital sin of Pride.

* * *

In politics, it is dictators who love themselves first. In religion, it is heretics and those who start their own religions who love themselves first.

* * *

People sometimes write their own name over and over in

order to subconsciously give themselves more importance.

* * *

Right intention determines the end product of action. Giving based on Charity gains grace. Giving based on pride is a sin.

* * *

We must always be careful that our goals and ambitions do not become a slice of the cake of Pride that we cook for ourselves - and ultimately burn.

* * *

Natural fairness and supernatural fairness are not the same. As humans, we judge and evaluate by natural fairness alone. God overrules our human judgements and evaluations. Our reason tells us we should be glad that He does so; our emotions tell us otherwise. This is why the devil appeals to us primarily through our emotions. Even when he appeals to us through the sin of Pride, it is primarily through the emotional level of pride long before he appeals to the pride of the will.

* * *

People who give autographs may consciously or subconsciously place themselves above their accomplishments.

* * *

When someone says, "I know I'm not perfect," it could be a statement of Pride as well as one of humility.

* * *

I am not only not better than anyone else, I am worse - because I think myself better.

* * *

Evangelists too often seem to be the exact opposites of the "holy man on top of the mountain." Their attitude seems to be, "God needs me to reach you," or at least, "God needs you to go through me." The truly holy person thinks, "God does not need me at all to do His work." Instead of proclaiming themselves indispensable through Pride, they proclaim unnecessary, through humility. If by the Will of God and the free will of another person, they are to be used as an instrument of God, then they may be sought after.

* * *

Sometimes the reason you cannot see the beam in your own eye is because you have plywood eyelids.

SIN

If stoning to death for adultery was the law today, there would soon be a shortage of stones.

* * *

When one person sins, the whole world loses.

* * *

You can sin by thought, word or action - but you can also gain grace by thought, word, or action. Whenever a temptation comes to sin by any one of the first, we should change either the thought, word, or action to something that gains grace, instead of something that commits a sin.

* * *

It is not a sin to be wrong through ignorance. It is a sin to stay wrong after knowledge is attained.

* * *

Sometimes the only way to not have sins of the mouth is to keep the mouth shut.

* * *

We must do penance for sins of the past. It is best to avoid unlawful pleasures today, which we will have to do penance for tomorrow - when they are sins of the past.

* * *

Buck-passing stops with you - you always have a choice. If you choose wrong, do not blame someone else. If you did not know about a choice, then you may not be as responsible.

* * *

True Charity is love of God and love of neighbor. Abortion contradicts both.

* * *

Do not tell yourself that you will never sin. Do your best to avoid it, and when fail, be truly sorry and do penance. The best of intentions do not eliminate the effects of Original Sin.

* * *

Christ said that if a man looks at a woman with lust, he has already committed adultery with her in his heart. When a woman wears any immodest fashion, she is responsible for his sin to the extent she has caused the temptation.

* * *

We are to accept our sinfulness - not our sins.

* * *

"Jesus was like us in everything but sin." To define that more, He was like us in everything but the tendency to sin as a result of original sin. For Him to have sinned, He would have had to commit a kind of Original Sin. The same thing applies to the Blessed Virgin Mary. This shows us that we can never reach Christ's perfection on Earth - although we are always supposed to strive for it.

This is what makes it not only possible, but also understandable, how God can and does forgive us over and over for committing the same sins over and over. This is why (while not excusing ourselves for any sin or sins) we should also be able to forgive ourselves, and not condemn ourselves or give up because we are weak. There will even be times when we will seem to be weaker than other times in certain areas of temptation even though we may have worked and prayed for years at getting rid of that particular sin. Even when we feel that we are finally making improvement or even almost eliminated a sin, we should never feel "safe", as not only "Pride goes before a fall," but also weakness.

* * *

Pornography is the world's biggest SINDrome.

* * *

The seven Cardinal Sins, like all sins, are small at first. However, they lead to habits of venial sins or then to Mortal Sins.

* * *

What you did yesterday in God's service only made up for yesterday's sins. Start today off in His service to help avoid sins today.

* * *

We are shocked by people who commit sins even just a little different from us. We condemn the murderer after we have wished harm on someone. We reject the thief, but covet what he has stolen. We are shocked by sins of homosexuality after committing fornication or adultery. What hypocrisy! We cannot raise ourselves by lowering others.

* * *

We commit enough sins every day of omission, without going out and chalking up any of commission.

* * *

Humans are good with a tendency of evil - courtesy of Original Sin. A life of Mortal Sin can make someone evil, with only a tendency of good left. We choose where we want to be on the spectrum.

* * *

Poverty is occasionally a cause of crime, but never an excuse for it. Unhappy home life is occasionally a cause of teens taking drugs, but never an excuse for it.

* * *

Suffering ends for a baby who is aborted; suffering begins for those who are responsible.

* * *

Love makes the world go round. Lust makes it stop.

* * *

God will not condemn us for having weaknesses, or having sinned because of them. He will condemn us for using our weaknesses as an excuse to live in a constant state of Mortal Sin.

* * *

As far as paying a price on Earth, a mistake can be worse than a sin. The latter is worse, though, because the delayed price of a sin is incomparably worse.

* * *

Non-baptized persons can never possess the supernatural virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity since they have never entered the state of grace, and are still under the dominion of Satan. They can have natural virtue, as a result of having a Soul.

While a baptized person can still be tempted and still sin, he is not under the dominion of Satan. This means he not only has more control of his Free Will in choosing individual acts of good over individual acts of evil, but he also has the means of attaining grace for God to help him make the right choice - even if it is the difficult one.

An unbaptized person is one who reaches the age of consciousness and beyond, while already waist-deep in quicksand. Since they do not perceive themselves sinking, they claim that it is not quicksand. It is difficult to convince them that there is more freedom out of the quicksand than in it, since they have never been out of it.

There is also a security in being in the quicksand. And even if they perceive themselves sinking very slowly, they refuse to believe that they will ever go totally under.

* * *

Original sin leads to human weakness; human weakness leads to temptation; temptation leads to emotion over reason; emotion over reason leads to Pride; and Pride leads to objective sin.

THE DEVIL

We would be better off if we followed our Guardian Angel's warnings rather than the devil's temptations.

* * *

The devil is a good magician. His right hand is waving women's liberation and sexual liberation while his left hand is hiding the glory of motherhood and the things necessary for a woman's true happiness.

* * *

In everything we do, we are either serving Christ or we are serving Satan; either we are following the God of light and truth, or we are following the deceit of the prince of darkness.

* * *

If you don't believe in the devil, you don't believe in temptations. If you don't believe in temptations, you don't believe in sin. If you don't believe in sin, you don't believe in contrition. If you don't believe in contrition, you don't believe in a Hell. If you don't believe in a Hell, you don't believe in the devil. Souls that are led into this vicious circle - and remain there - are the Souls that are lost for all Eternity.

* * *

The best way to please the devil is to simply quit trying to be virtuous. If that is the case, then you do his work for him.

* * *

No one is born with virtues. We are only born with the potential for virtue. Virtues are the fruit of the Soul. Animals and plants have attributes, but they cannot have virtues. Adam and Eve had the tendency toward virtues before the Fall. Now we have the tendency toward vice as a result of Original Sin, and virtue comes only through considerable effort to be Christ-like.

The devil often allows you to freely practice one or two virtues that comes easy because of our natural personalities. There are two reasons for this. The first is to build Pride in these areas, and the second is to keep us from concentrating on developing all the other virtues we do not have. As usual, the devil wants us on one extreme of the other.

* * *

The devil always attacks us at our weakest point. That is usually the sex drive for men and vanity for women. Pride is the basis for both.

TIME AND ETERNITY

Time, from the beginning of it to the end of it, is but a speck within Eternity.

* * *

The "future" is only the "present" which has not arrived yet.

* * *

People do not usually live their physical life like there is no tomorrow, but they often live their spiritual life like there is no Eternity.

* * *

Whenever you have a bad day, think of this: If you offer it up, you can eventually receive in return over one million years of perfect happiness in Heaven for it. If that is a worthwhile trade, then stop complaining.

* * *

Time is the prisoner of all men, but only the ambitious complain of the chains.

* * *

Eternity is like an expanding balloon that never bursts.

* * *

Depression can sometimes make you realize what your life is really like. More often, realizing what your life is really like is what brings on depression. Either way, the only remedy is to offer your life - with all its problems, troubles, and worries - up to God. The cure is to keep your mind on Eternity, in order that the slow passage of time on Earth does not seem as bad.

* * *

A life of anything less than Hell on Earth, is better than an Eternity in Hell itself.

* * *

On a retreat, time passes by fast and smoothly; in the world it passes slow and bumpy.

* * *

The road to Hell is paved with pleasure.
The road to Heaven is paved with penance.
Which road is easiest on Earth?
Which road is best for Eternity?

* * *

God created time; man invented schedules. God gave us days and nights and moons and seasons to measure the passage of time. Man invented calendars and appointments.

* * *

One fears the Eternity of Hell more after spending two solid hours at a boring lecture.

DEATH

The most important thing in your life to look forward to, is your death.

* * *

It is part of God's Permissive Will that we can die of other than natural causes. This teaches us that we can die anytime - whether we are prepared or not.

* * *

Do not be afraid of death. As far, as this life is concerned, you will probably experience just about everything except complete happiness. And the sooner you die, if in the state of Sanctifying grace, the sooner you get a chance to experience perfect happiness in Heaven.

* * *

Instead of a condemned man feasting at his last meal, it would be better if he fasted.

* * *

Daybreak and sunset are the two most beautiful times of the day. In our lives it may be the same - that birth and death are the most beautiful times in it.

* * *

To die a quick martyr's death is not only a good way to go, but also one of the easiest - if you have Faith.

* * *

People often become religious when death is a closer reality, and they realize how they have lived their lives.

* * *

God's Mercy and Justice must be accentuated equally, because they will be equally applied on Judgement Day. Mercy will be shown to the merciful, and Justice will be shown to the unjust.

* * *

Death is simply an end to the fight to avoid sin and be virtuous.

* * *

If death dropped you out of the course of life, what grade would you end up with? And would you be promoted or demoted?

PURGATORY AND HELL

Remember to pray for the Souls in Purgatory; someday you will be one of them.

* * *

Are you willing to suffer your Purgatory on Earth? That is easier to say than to really believe, and easier to really believe than really live.

* * *

Parents do not stop loving their children when they punish them. God does not stop loving those He punishes in Purgatory.

* * *

If Hell is complete despair, then Purgatory could be considered a temporary depression. Therefore, if you offer to God your depression on Earth, you may spend less time in Purgatory.

* * *

Some people are basically good, but make some exceptions where abortion is concerned. God takes basically good people to Heaven, but makes some exceptions for pro-abortionists.

* * *

Pious men pray for Heaven; materialistic men challenge Hell.

* * *

If most of the rest of the world seems to want to go to Hell, let them. It is their Free Will to choose to do so. You have your Free Will choose not to follow them.

* * *

Spicy food on earth causes us heartburn here. Spicy sins on earth cause our Soul to burn in Hell for Eternity.

* * *

Is Hell too incomprehensible and remote for the fear of it to cause you not to sin? Then picture Hell as an Eternity of the most frustrating thing you can imagine.

* * *

Hell's motto - "Hindsight is better than foresight." Heaven's motto - "I told you so."

HEAVEN

The only real ambition anyone should have in this life is to get to Heaven.

* * *

The complete and utter absurdities of this life not only make a Heaven and Hell necessary to give this life meaning, but also necessitates different heights of Heaven and different depths of Hell. If not, there would be only one type of road to Heaven and one type of road to Hell. There would be only one kind of life to lead to save our Soul and it would be easily recognizable and accessible for all those wanting to follow it. That would be a dispenser-type of Soul saving. You put in so much and instantly receive exactly what you paid for.

* * *

If this world was the "End", then those following God's laws would be perfectly happy, and those disobeying would be completely miserable. We would be getting our reward and punishment here on Earth. Since there is no true Justice here on Earth in the natural order, there is necessarily a Justice to be met in a supernatural order. This presupposes another existence after this Earthly one.

* * *

Our natural existence has as its main feature, the element of time: The supernatural, since it exists, must be in the realm of Eternity, in which there is no time. And since everything in the natural existence changes from one second to the next, the supernatural existence must necessarily be unchanging.

There will be no need for novelties in Heaven.

* * *

Earth is frustration; Limbo is peace; Purgatory is suffering; and Hell is despair. Real happiness can only be found in Heaven.

* * *

The roads to Hell are many, but they are most often camouflaged. The roads traveled are the rationalized continuous breaking of one or more of God's Commandments. The camouflage is the drive for money, power, fame, or pleasure.

The roads to Heaven as just as many. A brief few categories would be: that of a baptized baby; a martyr; an acceptance and offering up of a life of physical or mental suffering; the living of daily life in either the single state, married state, or religious state; the life of sufferings of a chosen Saint; and the conversion before death of a lifelong sinner.

* * *

Good guys finish last - but only on Earth.

* * *

Those who have lost natural Hope for happiness on Earth should concentrate on the supernatural Hope for happiness in Heaven.

* * *

It is not necessary to aim for one of the higher levels of Heaven, as the Saints enjoy. It is enough to long for the bottom row in Heaven one where there is a simple perfect happiness for all Eternity. Of course, just to attain that, one must be continually striving to "be perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect."

* * *

Since those following God, and those rejecting Him, live on so many different levels, and die on so many different levels, true Justice is never met in this life. The rewards in the supernatural life which were attained or earned in the natural life, must therefore be everlasting. Just as we can continually rise or fall in the natural life, there can be no rising or falling in the supernatural life.

* * *

For each prayer, penance, sacrifice or work of Charity you do in this life that outweighs your sins on Judgement Day, your place in Heaven will be higher. For every unconfessed Mortal Sin you die with, after the single one necessary for eternal punishment, your place in Hell will be lower.

The only cure for unhappiness is happiness. The reward for a life of suffering on earth is an Eternity of happiness in Heaven.

* * *

We can never really know when we have done enough to have gained Heaven, and even if we did, is not more prayers and suffering for our few years on earth worth the eternal reward we will get for them?

* * *

If Heaven was just a natural happiness for Eternity, it would still be a worthwhile trade to offer up unhappiness for a whole lifetime on earth for it. Heaven, however, is a supernatural happiness which we cannot even imagine. There is really no comparison.

* * *

Heaven is going to be great - no machines to break down.

IMITATION OF CHRIST

Christ puts His hand out to each of us, but we must go to Him to take it.

* * *

Do not be discouraged because you are not perfect and never will be; just keep the ideal of Christ as your goal, and always keep working toward that ideal.

* * *

If Christ could die for His enemies, we can at least live for our friends.

* * *

Christ's human nature suffered in order to show us how we must subject our bodies and minds to God rather than to the world.

* * *

Only when we are willing to give up the sensual pleasures of the body, and the contentment pleasures of the mind, can we receive the divine pleasures of the Soul - the inner peace and serenity of an earthly union with our Creator.

* * *

Only people who really try to be like Christ, know how much they really fail at it.

* * *

If you accept your problems as your cross, and as your way to serve God, then it will not bother you as much to think about them. Work is not as difficult when you are helping someone else. A cross is not as difficult when it becomes a sacrifice to God.

* * *

To be Christ-like is never easy. With practice, however, it does become easier.

* * *

Why is it that the Passion of Christ refers to suffering - while the passion of everyone else refers to pleasure?

* * *

If our feelings are hurt, or something goes wrong, or we wonder how to get along with people, or we find it difficult to offer up all trials and crosses, there is only one mental solution: what would Christ do? Then, what would Christ think about me doing any differently?

* * *

When you have had a really bad day, and you find it difficult to get your mind off of it, meditate on the passion of Christ. Your worst day cannot compare to His worse day.

* * *

If you had a videotape of your day's activities, would you want to edit it before Christ saw it?

* * *

Christ proved his love by action - by dying on the cross. How few prove their love of God by their action - carrying their cross, compared to those who cry "Lord, Lord" only because they want some kind of "miracle healing."

* * *

If you get discouraged and depressed and do not feel close to God, you are not unusual, or lost. Remember, even Christ said, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

* * *

We can only bring others to Christ by being Christ-like ourselves.

* * *

Everyone has a vocation to be an apostle of Christ - not just a follower.

* * *

We should reflect more on the passion of Christ. The agony in the garden is like the alienation we sometimes feel, along with the resulting loneliness.

The scourging at the pillar is like the tongue lashings of superiors, or public embarrassment or humiliation. The crowning with thorns is like the authority over our heads which we must accept. The carrying of the cross is like our daily trials and frustrations - mistakes and disappointments from which we must rise and move on. The crucifixion is like the living death we must endure in this life to gain the rewards of everlasting happiness.

* * *

The simplest form of being Christlike is to let a baby close its fingers around one of yours.

* * *

It is easy to die for Christ. The hard thing is to live for him.

* * *

Some of the martyrs had it relatively easy. Many had to stand up for Christ only once and then receive a quick death. Others had it much harder, by having to go through physical sufferings which was either forced on them, or which they could not reduce. Sometimes the hardest suffering, however, may sometimes be the day to day and year to year mental and spiritual suffering which one endures after deciding to really follow Christ, and to go against the world - and possibly almost everyone in it.

* * *

To really be like Christ, one must be willing to suffer for some one else's sins.

* * *

Christ said, "Go out and teach what I have commanded," not "Go out and spread your own opinions." He also did not say, "Go out and start your own religion."

IMITATION OF MARY

If Christ came to us through the Blessed Virgin Mary, then we should be able to go through her to Christ.

* * *

People confuse devotion to Our Lord and devotion to Our Lady because they confuse adoration and veneration. It is Christ's Will that we honor his mother, which is why he said, "Behold thy mother".

* * *

Every Saint had a great devotion to Our Lady, but in the recent years, some theologians do not believe that is important. Whom do you wish to believe?

* * *

Human love can never be perfect because of our fallen nature and the fallen nature of the humans to which we give our love. The only way to sustain human love is by having it under - and uniting it with - Divine Love. It is the reason why you cannot love anything else about a person unless you love their Soul first.

The Blessed Virgin Mary expressed perfect human love because she never sinned.

* * *

A mother's job is to lead her child from total dependence to independence. The Blessed Mother's job is to lead her children from independence to dependence on her son.

* * *

Eve sinned by Pride, while Our Lady became the mother of Christ by Humility. Those who refuse to honor Our Lady or the female Saints are left with whom to admire or emulate?

* * *

Women are starting to dress more modestly in order not to flaunt themselves as much, and to avoid getting physically attacked. They call it "defensive dressing". The result is an improvement, but it would be better if the reason was based on the imitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary's virtues of modesty and purity, and not just because of present social conditions.

* * *

If simple housework was good enough for the Blessed Virgin Mary, it is good enough for any other woman. If the vocation of being a good mother was good enough for the Blessed Virgin Mary, it is a good enough vocation for any other woman.

* * *

A child turns to his mother for security, encouragement, and help. We should all turn to Our Lady as our mother in Heaven.

* * *

St. Ignatius Loyola daydreamed much about courting a woman. After a vision of Our Lady, he had a different lady to think about.

* * *

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

The heaviest responsibility in the world belongs to the Pope.
Pray for him.

* * *

The Sign of the Cross:
"In the name of the Father" - I will obey the 10
Commandments.
"and of the Son" - I will obey the command of Christ to love
my neighbor as myself.
"and of the Holy Spirit" - I will obey Christ's institutional
church, the Roman Catholic Church, which is guided by the Holy
Spirit.
"Amen" - I believe this and will live this.

* * *

No one actually converts anyone else. A person converts
himself with the help of God. God only converts in cases like St.
Paul, which are extremely rare. Each of us is to be the kind of
example which leads others to the True Church.

* * *

The only churches which are truly special are those which
hold the Blessed Sacrament. A conscience based on the
Commandments and the teachings of The Roman Catholic Church is
like a pane of clear glass. The light of grace penetrates in a straight
line. A conscience based on anything less, such as situation ethics,
is like opaque glass. Little light can get through and what does is
refracted in many directions.

* * *

The apostles did miracles in the name of Christ; priests
forgive sins the same way.

* * *

The Catholic Church is the key to unlocking the mysteries of
the library of life. Even once inside the library, we find some books
that are difficult to understand, and some that are impossible to
understand. That is no reason to flee from the library. Only by
staying there and spending time with the easy books will we ever
advance to more difficult ones. Roman Catholics are born with a key;
non-Catholics have only to try the key out when it is given to them.

* * *

The Sacrament of Confirmation should mark the beginning of
spiritual maturity - not the end of it.

* * *

Conscience is only infallible the very first time it speaks, because it can easily be taught to speak incorrectly. We cannot err if we follow Christ's infallible Church and its 2000-year-old teachings.

* * *

Face to face confession is not good if you use it to explain away your sins to a friend, instead of confessing your sins to Christ's representative.

* * *

Teenage boys are being encouraged to not go into the seminary until they have lived in the world longer, and even until they have graduated from a secular college. That is like carrying an ice bucket into Purgatory and expecting to have a cold drink the next day. Some seminarians are even allowed to date while they are in the seminary. That is like trying to give someone a blood transfusion while not doing anything about their severed aorta.

* * *

Actors and actresses flock to Hollywood by the thousands to gain fame and fortune. They would accomplish more if they flocked to Christ to gain eternal life. The only ones who succeed in Hollywood are the ones who work the hardest, refuse to give up, have the most talent, and have the luck to be at the right place at the right time. To gain Sainthood, one has to work at the spiritual life the hardest, and refuse to give up. God gives us all enough talent for this, and the only luck is the chance of being born a Roman Catholic, rather than having to search for the truth and become a convert.

* * *

The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit has been changed for some from Piety, Counsel, Knowledge, Understanding, Fortitude, Wisdom, and Fear of the Lord - to Relevant, Values, Meaningful, Sincerity, Sharing, Witness, and Feelings.

* * *

When priests speak from the pulpit, they should avoid the danger of using many words but saying nothing.

* * *

A good confessor does not just let you tell him where you think you are wrong. He has to tell you where you are wrong, and what you must do about it. Then you must follow his directions from obedience and humility as you would Christ.

* * *

Confession, without the intention of change, is a lie.

* * *

Poverty, chastity, and obedience are a small price to pay, for a person to make great accomplishments for Christ in the religious life.

* * *

Pastors should delegate more duties - not responsibilities.

* * *

Psychiatrists allow people to be what they are, and just try to get people to accept themselves for being what they are. Priests try to get people to improve what they are, and try to be more of what God wants them to be. Psychiatrists are more popular with people than priests are, but the important thing is, "Who is more popular with God?"

* * *

There is nothing that can happen to a Catholic in his lifetime in which the Church does not have a guideline. All moral decisions are based on Church teachings.

* * *

Confession only once a year will keep the Soul alive, but ignores all the graces that God would like to give us for the Soul to be very healthy.

* * *

It is up to Catholics to be the good example, that the celebration of Mardi Gras ends at Midnight on Tuesday - and does not continue uninterrupted until Easter Sunday.

* * *

Young people cannot hear God calling them for a religious vocation if they always have music blaring in their ears - or always talking on the phone or texting.

* * *

A religion teacher will not be judged on a success/failure ratio in trying to help others get to Heaven. They will only be judged on whether or not they taught the whole truth of the Roman Catholic Faith. That is even more important for priests.

* * *

Music has a unique ability to change your feeling and emotions in a matter of seconds. Religious music in church should raise our minds and hearts to God.

* * *

One of the most obvious examples of why Christ set up an infallible Church to interpret the Bible, is to look at what the Supreme

Court has done to the U. S. Constitution.

* * *

Psychiatrists are more popular than priests, because a psychiatrist always says "Yes," while a priest often says, "No."

* * *

The latest fad theology is that it is unnecessary to work at becoming a better person, because "God loves us as we are." Avoid anyone with this philosophy, as they cannot help you get to Heaven.

* * *

There is a mental puberty as well as a physical one. There is also a spiritual puberty which starts at Confirmation. Whether we mature or riot depends on our using this Sacrament.

* * *

For those in cloistered religious life, their spirituality is the roots and flowers of their life.

* * *

If you had to describe your beliefs and philosophy in no more than two words, it should be "Roman Catholic."

* * *

SAINTS

Marriage is not for the "greatest lovers" in the world. Like St. Francis of Assisi, their love is for God.

* * *

It has been said that God gives us the Saints we need when we need them. That not only applies to when they lived, but also when they are canonized. God gave us such 20th Century Saints such as St. John Neumann to inspire priests, and Saint Elizabeth Seton to inspire nuns. Like all Saints, they teach us humility and service to God. They are also examples of how in this day and age, God can be served best within a religious vocation, rather than the denying of one.

* * *

Do not presume to be able to resist temptation alone. St. Peter was confident about not denying Christ too.

* * *

The spiritual life of monks and cloistered nuns is like crops that grow underground and are hidden from the world. Some of the best of these crops, like St. Therese of Lisieux, are only exposed to the world after their death.

* * *

All Saints had trials and temptations, discouragements and depressions. That just proves they were humans like us, with failures and successes alike.

* * *

There have been some particular Saints who have been able to live on Holy Communion and water only, and for as long as forty years. These are very exceptional cases. This is an example of God's Directive Will - a miracle. A person cannot do that on his own. The human body cannot receive enough chemical nourishment from a wafer of bread to live. It is only because that wafer is the Body of Christ, and the special grace that God gives with it in these exceptional cases, that makes this kind of life possible.

* * *

St. Joseph was certainly the kind of man who would take time away from his job as a carpenter to give attention and affection to his foster child.

* * *

Hidden Saints - those that are totally united with Christ in secret - may even be higher in Heaven than some well-known Saints.

* * *

When St. John refers to himself in his gospel, as "the disciple whom Jesus loved", it is an example of humility - not conceit.

* * *

St. Thomas More's two years in a cell, and St. Paul's four years imprisonment, may sound to us like cruel punishments and a harsh life. It may not have been as bad as it sounds. Their time could have passed quickly in contemplation, a lack of interest in worldly ways, and a lack of daily conflict with other people. If given enough to eat, and were spared torture, it very well could have been a nice, long, "retreat" with God.

* * *

Even a great Saint such as St. Ignatius Loyola had thoughts about suicide. Few people are never tempted by the devil in this area.

* * *

Some Saints were not "last" on Earth. Many received acknowledgment of the good they did here on Earth, and were privileged Souls through mystical experiences. These special graces, however, were only given to them because they had a high level of Humility which preceded it.

* * *

The higher the holiness attained on Earth, the higher the price it costs to attain it. Do not desire to be a Saint unless you also desire to pay that price - and then are willing to do it.

There is always more purification that can be done in our thoughts and actions.

* * *

The Saints offered their great sufferings to God with such great resignation, that He gave them the grace to have even joy in suffering. This is something which should inspire us to carry our cross better and to tell ourselves we are never at the point where we are serving God as well as we should. Our intentions are never as pure as we like to think they are.

* * *

St. Theresa spent twenty-seven years in going through the three stages of prayer. She would certainly laugh at those who think they can be "saved" in one moment in one day and then think that Heaven is guaranteed to them.

* * *

Babies have no awareness of God. They rely on a set of God's instruments - their parents - to give them life love, and affection, and security. Their needs are little; they are satisfied very easily. Their only pains are occasional hunger and discomfort. They are not aware of a past or future. And they bring an awareness of God and joy to

those who love them for what are - just babies. On the other end of the spectrum is not the aged, but the Saintly. They have a great awareness of God and rely on His instruments of sanctifying and actual grace for their needs which are mostly spiritual - even in this life. Their pains are God-sent or self-imposed for the love of God and the good of their own Soul and their neighbors. Their past is Faith and their future is Hope. And they bring an awareness of God to those who see in them a reflection of God's Goodness, and a joy to those who wish to be like them just a disciple of Christ. The baby and the Saint are like God's two mountain peaks. The rest of us are somewhere in the valley below.

* * *

All Saints were not happy, but they all had Peace of Soul.

DEVOTIONS

We visit friends often, but how often do we visit the Blessed Sacrament?

* * *

It's amazing how so many people cannot understand why Catholics pray to God through the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Saints, but then turn around and pray to God through a television evangelist. The difference is that an appeal through Our Lady, or the Saints expresses and satisfies a "Devotion," and an appeal through an evangelist expresses and satisfies an "Emotion." Spiritual devotion exists and flourishes through joy and suffering, and in the absence of either. Spiritual emotion exists and flourishes only through the feelings of joy. There is a big difference.

* * *

Transcendental Meditation is popular because people have been told that formal prayer is no longer any good or necessary. The Rosary is criticized as being repetitious and monotonous by the same people who are repeating "mantras", (nonsense words over and over), to attain a level of mental calmness and serenity. The only reason TM is popular is because people have forgotten how to meditate on spiritual matters. The fifteen mysteries of the Rosary are enough to meditate on for a lifetime. The most important difference between them is that TM is self-centered, and the Rosary is God-centered. How much sacrifice does it take to turn off the television set for one half-hour program and pray the Rosary as a family?

CARRYING YOUR CROSS

Our problem, as humans, is not being unable to bear our crosses, but being unwilling to bear them.

* * *

When you stand too close to your Own cross, you really cannot see it very well. When you stand back, you not only can see it clearer, but you get a much better prospective of it. If your eyes are cast downward, and you focus on your cross's shadow, it may appear to be much greater than it is. If your eyes are cast upward toward God the cross may seem much smaller.

* * *

It is not our choice on whether or not we will have a cross to bear. It is only our choice on how we will carry it.

* * *

Forget about bearing your cross yesterday; do not worry about bearing it tomorrow; simply bear it today and off it up to God. That is a great prayer - the prayer of resignation to God's Will.

* * *

Christ proved his Love by action, by dying on the cross. How few prove their Love of God by their action, their cross - compared to those who cry "Lord, Lord" only because they want healing.

* * *

Do not make crosses for yourself. The world will give you enough without your help.

* * *

There is nothing we can suffer that Christ did not suffer. His mental sufferings were rejection, humiliation, scorn, mock, betrayal, denial, verbal abuse, and misunderstanding. His physical suffering included scourging, crowning with thorns, carrying of the heavy beam, nailing to the cross, and the slow agonizing death of crucifixion. Whenever we suffer anything similar - which will always be to a lesser degree - we should remember how Christ suffered before us, and offer it up as Christ did, to the Will of His Father. If God expected this of His own Son, can we believe that he expects nothing from us and that our life here be perfectly happy?

* * *

Instead of asking, "Why me, God?" we should ask "Why your son, God?" If the only answer is, "The Will of God," then we should be satisfied with the same answer.

* * *

Put down everyone's crosses except your own. Those are the only ones you have to carry. Then you will find that they are not as heavy as you thought.

* * *

The pain of two people may be equal in intensity, but the one who has suffered longer has a harder cross to bear.

* * *

A weekend retreat, especially a silent one, will not remove your crosses; it just makes your shoulders stronger. Your crosses then seem lighter and easier to bear.

* * *

Of the crosses which people have to carry in this life, some come in the giant economy size: the death of a spouse, the loss of all material possessions, continuing illness, or the unending frustrations of a particular vocation. If we think of them in their totality, they will seem overpowering and almost unbearable. We have a sense of helplessness when confronted with either a large, temporary cross or a small but lengthy one.

* * *

The best way to bear a large cross may be to break it down into its component parts, each of which is easier to carry. The next step is to think for a minute how each of these small parts could be much bigger. It is another case of the man with no shoes accepting his condition better after seeing another man with no feet.

* * *

When you get to the end of your rope, you should always find a large knot there to rest on - the gift of supernatural Hope and the promise of an Eternity of perfect happiness in Heaven for bearing the crosses of this life. It is permissible to rest there for awhile. Then it is time to start climbing again.

* * *

For some, the daily cross would not be as hard to bear if they did not already have a lifetime cross on their shoulders.

* * *

Most people do not want to carry their cross. They believe it is too hard. But carrying the cross is really the freedom we are seeking. It releases us from a dependence on this world as any kind of an end in itself. Failures and disappointments are only means to higher personal sanctification.

Others pick up the cross, and then put it down, thinking, "It is too heavy." There are also those who carry the cross for a number of

years and then exchange it for another.

Regardless, we cannot avoid having a cross to bear.

* * *

People can only be tested by fire until they is consumed by it.
Sometimes one does not pass the test until all that remains is a piece
of burned ember.

* * *

A cross that is carried is lighter than one that is dragged.

* * *

Time heals most wounds. Heaven heals all wounds.

PEACE OF MIND - PEACE OF Soul

Peace of mind is not easy to acquire - and the search is often painful, but finding it makes the journey more than worthwhile.

* * *

Peace of Soul comes when you finally give up trying to get God to do your will, and you agree to do His Will.

* * *

You have peace of Soul when your Soul knows its place in the communion of Saints, It is through your Soul that you are bonded to the Souls on Earth, the Souls in Purgatory and the Souls in Heaven.

* * *

Peace of mind and peace of Soul come from seeing this life for what it is - no more and no less.

* * *

Happiness is an emotion. To be happy, the emotions must be satisfied. Peace of Soul is spiritual consolation. To have it, we must have a good spiritual life.

* * *

Peace of mind comes when you are avoiding committing Mortal Sins. Peace of Soul comes when you are avoiding committing Venial Sins.

* * *

Peace of mind involves your relationship with the world and the people in it. It is being at peace with yourself in your state of life - and your state of circumstances.

* * *

Peace of Soul involves your relationship with God. It is being at peace with yourself in your knowledge of doing God's Will to the best of your ability. Both involve the acceptance of God's Will for you.

* * *

There literally is a world of difference between peace of mind and peace of Soul. Peace of mind refers to a lack of anxiety over the things of this world, both objects and people. Peace of Soul refers to a lack of anxiety over the things of God's world, which is the spiritual life which is to come. It includes not only a lack of anxiety about understanding God, but also the non-necessity to do so.

* * *

Peace of Soul comes from knowing that you are part of God's plan, and being perfectly satisfied being the smallest part.

* * *

Peace of Soul is a result of Faith and Hope - to accept without knowledge, to know without understanding, to understand without comprehension.

* * *

Peace of Soul is a gift from God signifying that you are what God wants you to be at that particular time.

* * *

The less fun you seek; the more peace of mind you find. The less pleasure you seek; the more joy you find.

* * *

We can have peace of mind - not in spite of our crosses, but sometimes because of them.

LIFE ON EARTH

Life itself is so simple. It is the living of it that is so complicated.

* * *

Life is so peaceful and uncomplicated when you do not have to deal with the hassles of the world and the hassles of other human beings. Unfortunately, that is a natural part of the trials of life.

* * *

As you sit under the branches of a majestic oak tree you are protected from the sun by the branches and leaves. The sun is never still, though, and the shadows you sit under now will be in direct sunlight in a few minutes. Even the densest of trees allows rays of sunlight through. This can be a reminder that the branches and leaves are like the Catholic Church and its sacraments which protect and shelter me from the sunlight of temptation. Just as you have to keep moving your chair to stay in the shade, so too can you never sit still in the seeking to do God's Will. When the sun goes down, it is your time of sleep - your respite from the temptations of the world. The next morning the daily frustrations of trying to stay in the shade starts again. All of life is simply a chain of days like this - trying to keep from getting sunburned.

* * *

Life should be what you make of it, not just what it makes of you.

* * *

There is nothing wrong with trying to change this world into a Garden of Eden (however impossible as it may be), but the way to go about it is not by bargaining with a snake.

* * *

Humans will always be doomed to some unhappiness because we can never attain our ambitions. Our ambitions will always necessarily stay ahead of our accomplishments, like a carrot continually being held in front of a walking horse. What can cause the most frustration is not realizing what our most important and most natural ambition should be - and that is simply a union with God.

* * *

If you cannot be happy - be busy.

* * *

Begin and end every day with an intention to do right and avoid sin. Faith must be lived daily, not searched for under a cloud of dust in a closet where it lies unused, waiting for a traumatic moment in you life.

* * *

Some people look to answers for their problems like they look for 4-leaf clovers. They look down and claim to see one, without looking closer to see if it is not just two clovers next to each other and giving a false impression. Some look for a little while, and give up. Others leave with the thinking that there are not any, and then walk past a one that stands taller than any three-leaf in the whole patch.

* * *

Solutions to many of life's problems lie in persistence and patience.

* * *

We are never wrong in wanting to be happy in this life. We are sometimes wrong in expecting it, and are often wrong in thinking that we deserve it.

* * *

It is always difficult in climbing the ladder of life. For everyone, some rungs are missing, sawed off at one end, or greased.

* * *

Was there ever a good period on this Earth? In other words, was there ever a time on Earth when most people were good?

* * *

Life is a contest between "Yes" and "No" in our lives. It is either a conscious "Yes" and a subconscious "No," or a conscious "No" and a subconscious "Yes." There is always anxiety where there is a choice, and all of life is a choice. We will always, therefore, live with some anxiety.

* * *

Even if life revolved around you, it would still sometimes face away from you.

* * *

Our emotions are like the seasons: We have the Spring, where everything in our life seems to be blooming and it just feels good to be alive. We have the Summer, when we feel the heat of oppressiveness in the hassles of our daily lives. We have the Fall, when like the trees and its leaves, we seem to be losing that which makes us what we are, and that which makes our life full. It is the time of discouragement. The Winter is like the cold we can feel inside, the loneliness that possesses our minds and hearts and covers the virtue of Hope like a blanket. It is times like these when we must keep in mind the everlasting Spring that awaits us in the next world.

* * *

To avoid the rocks in life, we sometimes go through deep mud puddles. It often would be easier to simply take the time to remove

the rocks once and for all.

* * *

Life would be easier if we could take one small, happy moment and have it always - instead of the ups and downs we now experience.

* * *

This life is like a desert, with Christ as the oasis. The water is the Grace which we need to continue living this life. The people who die of thirst are the ones who think they can make it through the desert without water. To receive the water of Grace, one must go to the oasis. The oasis does not come to you. Pity those who think the oasis is only a mirage.

* * *

Everything on Earth that God made is good. It is only the misuse or overuse of it that makes it wrong. Evidently, some think the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the Garden of Eden was just there for decoration.

* * *

Life is especially difficult for two classes of people: those who refuse to admit they need others - and those who admit they need others, but do not have this need filled. The first class suffers from a lack of Charity, while the second class comes to suffer from a lack of enough Hope.

* * *

Probably the least understood and accepted parable is the one about getting paid the same whether working all day, half a day, or one hour. It simply means that through God's mercy, all 3 classes of people may gain Heaven: those who led exemplary lives from cradle to grave, those who wavered back and forth over a lifetime, and those who had a deathbed conversion. They all can receive the "pay" of Heaven, but there, the amounts may be for different. (After the amount of Purgatory - which will also be different.)

* * *

Every time we look at a tree, we can be reminded of human life on Earth.

The strength of a tree lies not in its branches or in its leaves, but in its roots. These roots do not show to the world, but without them, the tree would fall. The strength in our life is our spirituality. In order not to fall from the slightest wind from the world, we need to have sunk our roots deeply in God.

The leaves on a tree are like the Charity we show to others. Some people's works are like maple leaves - big and bright, but they all fall and the tree is bare. We should try to be evergreens, whose leaves are not as flashy, but which remain year round.

The moss that hangs from an oak tree is like the people who depend on us for support, and who we try to help. It adds weight to

the branches, and too much weight can cause one to break. However, moss also adds a special kind of beauty to a tree. Sometimes moss is cleared out of oak trees to protect them from hurricane winds. A spiritual retreat is like clearing the moss away for a few days to protect ourselves from the hurricane of discouragement and despair.

* * *

Even though a tree is rooted deep into the ground, it needs nourishment from the world. It needs sunlight and the soft touch of rain in order to grow and stay healthy. People need the sunlight of friendship and the soft touch of affection for them to grow and stay healthy.

Sometimes a tree looks strong and healthy, but is hollow inside, which is like a person eaten away inside by loneliness. When this is discovered in a tree, cement is poured into the hollow. When it is discovered in a person, something is always substituted for the human love which should be there. People either substitute a positive - such as a greater Love of God, or a negative - such as sinfulness.

Sometimes, a branch will be so long and heavy, that it will need to be propped up, or it will slowly bend until it touches the ground and remain there. We must keep in mind that there is always another person who needs our support.

* * *

All of life on Earth is both a comedy and a tragedy.

* * *

You can live for this life or the next life - you can't do both.

* * *

The PAST is over.

There is no FUTURE.

There is only **TODAY**.

And the worst day on Earth is better than the best day in Purgatory.

* * *

The only real ambition anyone should have in this life is to get to Heaven.

HUMAN RELATIONS

Be kind to other people. If you cannot do it for their sake, or your sake, then do it for God's sake.

* * *

Avoid talking simply for the sake of talking. All conversation should have a positive effect on you or someone else.

* * *

Once you understand your own human nature, you accept what good you are and work to improve on your faults. The next step is to begin to accept people for what they are if they have the same faults as you. The last step is to accept people for what they are when they have different faults than you.

* * *

It is easy to smile at others when you are happy. Try to do it even when you are not.

* * *

It is not wrong to feel dislike toward another. What is wrong is to dwell on it, or to carry your dislike into uncharitable action. This includes spreading gossip rumors or lies. It also includes spreading something truthful which was told in confidence or is not to be made public.

* * *

The increasing of our interior spiritual life is evidenced externally by an increase in our Faith, Hope and Charity to others.

* * *

We should allow others their Free Will, whether they do right or wrong, and not let it overly concern us. We should also do things that are right for ourselves, whether it overly concerns others or not. It is two sides of the same sword, and should not be brandished around in either direction.

* * *

Pain that we feel can be preferable than pain that we fear. This is why we sometimes choose the depression of loneliness over the fear of rejection by others.

* * *

Doing good for others for a personal reason is selfishness. Doing good for others for their gratitude is pride. Doing good for others for God's sake is Charity.

* * *

You can only truly share a memory with the person you had the memory with.

* * *

The world will never be perfect. We are supposed to treat everyone as brothers and sisters, but did you ever see brothers and sisters who always got along?

* * *

The best defense is a good offense. When you point out to someone a sin that needs to be corrected or a fault that needs to be corrected, they often quickly want to point out a sin or fault of yours. A humble person will be glad it is pointed out to him, in order to change for the better, rather than be insulted that someone thinks him less than perfect.

* * *

Men and women may both be hurt equally from an insult, but a woman will hurt longer from it.

* * *

We notice whatever we look for and are interested in. If you look for the good in others, you see the good. If you look for the bad, you see the bad.

* * *

You only really show yourself if you show your feelings, and you only really know someone if you know their feelings.

* * *

You cannot reason against emotion when emotion is in full bloom. You can only reason before emotion gets out of hand, or after it comes down again.

* * *

Do not condemn people because you know of a fault they have.

* * *

We should always keep in mind that other people feel about their problems the same way we feel about ours.

* * *

The tongue can be used as a sword or a scalpel; it can either hurt or heal.

* * *

If you find it difficult to get along with some people, it is best (and allowed) to avoid them as much as possible.

* * *

A smile is not always natural. It is either an outward expression of an inner feeling, or simply an outward facade that we show to others. At times, it is even more important to show the second one than the first.

* * *

After people have been hurt, they know how it feels, and should use this knowledge to avoid hurting others.

* * *

If something cannot be said in public, maybe it should not be said at all. Even if something can be said in public, it is often better that it is not.

* * *

If you treat people as if it was their last day on Earth you will have no regrets about them if they die. Better yet, treat them as if it is your last day on Earth, and when you die, you will have no regrets before God about how you treated them.

* * *

You have the most empathy with those who share the same kind of pain, whether it is spiritual, mental or physical.

* * *

It is often good to be alone; it is never good to feel alone.

* * *

Remember that Christ said that we must Love our enemies; He didn't say we must like them. You can accomplish the first only if you concentrate on their Souls and not their personalities.

LOVE

You can only Love that which has eternal life: God, angels, human beings. God is the source of all Love, and the product of all Love. Therefore, God must be the end of all Love.

* * *

It is easiest to show love and affection to children because they do not wonder if you have ulterior motives.

* * *

How can you Love your neighbor who is not perfect unless you first Love God who is perfect. Today's "*Love Thy Neighbor*" is not working because it is not based on "*Love Thy God*."

* * *

True Love is not what you want it to be, but what it actually is. Most people try to mold love into what they want, instead of letting love mold them into what they should be.

* * *

How can you "find" someone else if you haven't found "yourself" yet. We must Love ourselves for what we are and can be, before recognizing goodness and potentiality in others.

* * *

The essence of Love does not reside in the feelings.

* * *

The only time one should use the word "love" is when it is either about the Love of God, or reflects the Love of God.

* * *

True Love between humans reflects the Love of God, because like that Love, it is a mystery in its basic elements.

* * *

"I love you" should mean, "I see, respect, and admire your Christ-like qualities, such as : Kindness, consideration, generosity, forgiveness, understanding, sympathy and Charity.

* * *

We are commanded to "Love thy neighbor", but we are not commanded to like him. There is a major difference. The first concerns the Soul, the second only concerns the personality.

* * *

The Love of God is the highest possible Love on Earth. It is still the imperfect love of an imperfect human being for a perfect Divine Being. Therefore, a human can only love another human to a percentage of the amount of Love given to God. If the "love" given to another human is considered greater, then it is not "love". The love of one human for another is only an imperfect human being having an imperfect human love for another imperfect human being.

* * *

Children are so loving because they give without qualification, and receive without reservation.

MARRIAGE

People who marry in haste do not repent in leisure - they repent in misery. It is better to have much loneliness than much misery.

* * *

"Say what you mean and mean what you say" is never more important than when you make a vow.

* * *

There are imaginary marriages and then there are real marriages. The first ones exist in books and in movies, the second ones exist in the real world.

* * *

Even if a marriage is made in Heaven, it may still sometimes need repair on Earth. Fortunately, it always carries a lifetime guarantee. Simply offer it back to its Maker, and it will be returned better than new.

* * *

No two people have the same fingerprints, or voice prints. That would also be true for head prints and heart prints too. For two people to have a happy marriage, their head and heart prints need to be very similar.

* * *

True married Love is a union of Souls in God, not just a union of bodies in bed.

* * *

Wedding vows are unconditional as promises, but not as feelings. "I will love you forever," means "I will always want what is truly best for you." It does not mean, "I will always have positive feelings for you even if you abuse me, are cruel to our children, or do not provide for use properly.

* * *

Look for a mate that will satisfy your Soul and your mind - not just your flesh. Look for one who appeals to you spiritually and mentally more than physically.

* * *

The most important thing that is lacking in unhappy marriages is not communication - it is both having a true commitment to God, and then to each other. All marriage counseling is false if it starts anywhere after the primary commitment.

* * *

Living in an average marriage may be sometimes Purgatory on Earth; while living in a bad marriage may be as close to Hell on Earth as there can be.

* * *

In any one person, the need to give and the need to receive are equal. The potential for happiness and the potential for unhappiness are also equal. One of the prerequisites for a lasting happy marriage that is rarely considered, is for both persons to have the same needs and the same potential.

* * *

The time to see a priest or marriage counselor is before there are big problems in a marriage. It is preventive medicine.

* * *

Marriage is a process of growing, and you cannot grow if you take the roots out of the ground, (the sacramental vow), or if we turn away from the sun, (God's will).

* * *

Mistakes can help you in a relationship with another person. Mistakes in marriage, however, are life-lasting because it can effect that relationship on a permanent basis.

* * *

Sex may satisfy the body, but affection satisfies the mind.

* * *

It is understandable why non-Catholics do not have crucifixes in their church. They usually do not talk about carrying your cross, which may be one reason they believe in divorce and remarriage.

* * *

Puppy love often contains more individual elements of actual Love that can be found in many marriages.

* * *

To some people, marriage is a 50-50 relationship. They are right 50% of the time - and their spouse is wrong the other 50% of the time.

* * *

If men spent half as much time courting their wives after their marriage as they did before their marriage, their wives would not be starved for affection.

* * *

Marriage will never be "out-of-fashion" as long as divorce remains "in-fashion."

* * *

The greatest communication between a man and a woman is non-verbal. Words are sometimes an attempt to express verbally

what really cannot be expressed in that manner. This is why the word "love" is so misused. It is incorrectly used for desire, attraction, needs, wants, and that "chemistry."

* * *

It is common for women whose husbands give them no attention, to fix their hair up, put on make-up, dress up and act very sweet to every strange man they meet. If they would do the same for their husbands, they may get that attention they crave at home.

* * *

The definition of divorce: "And the one shall become two."

* * *

When one chooses a marriage partner, more concern should be with personality instead of looks, and more concern with philosophy rather than personality. We should be attracted to the Soul of another person more than the body. Emotion is attracted by the body: Reason is attracted by the mind: Goodness and Love are attracted by the Soul.

* * *

There's all the difference in this world between annulment and divorce - and in the next world, too, if remarriage follows each.

* * *

Living the marriage vows is the best service to God a married couple can perform - along with fulfilling their responsibilities toward their children.

PARENTING

Love does not eliminate discipline - it causes it.

* * *

Most people are willing to help others, but often not on a personal level.

* * *

Parents in America send millions of dollars every year to help starving children all over the world, while their own children are often starved for attention and affection.

* * *

One of the reasons children need the guidance of their parents, is because they do not think they need the guidance of their parents.

* * *

Parents are the principal religious educators of their children. Reading them a chapter a day of My Daily Bread or Imitation of Christ would probably fulfill half of their spiritual responsibility. Living them would fill most of the other half.

* * *

Working mothers more often than not, go home with so much TENSION that they are not in the right frame of mind to give the ATTENTION that they should give to their husbands and children.

* * *

Parents are like stereo speakers. If they are harmonious, the child hears a beautiful melody.

* * *

We experience childhood only one time in our life. If lost, it cannot be given back. There is no restitution or restoration for an unhappy childhood, or one in which was robbed of its innocence.

* * *

If parents spent as much time talking to their children as the mother does to their plants, and the father does to his bartender, the generation gap could be narrowed considerably.

* * *

How many parents ever tell their children that the word Christ in Christmas is more than a coincidence?

* * *

Women with children who have abortions should lose their

title of mother and be called "reproducing females."

* * *

The Christopher's Motto is: "It is better to light one candle than curse the darkness." Parents should try to light the candle of truth and understanding in their children. As adults, their children have the choice of continuing to burn it, or extinguish it.

* * *

A child does not do his best on a test if he did not study. A Catholic does not do his best as a Catholic without studying his Faith. And Catholic parents do not do their best if their Faith is not handed down by word and example.

* * *

One day the acorn must fall to the ground to start to grow on its own. If the acorn falls before being fully developed, it may never grow properly.

If the tree holds it back too long, however, and does not let go, the growth process is delayed beyond its normal beginning, and the effects can be lasting. More important, if it does not receive the right nourishment from the moment of release, the chance of a great oak can be lost forever. The same principles are true with a child who leaves his parents to start a life of his own.

* * *

Good parents spend ten times more time on moral education than sex education.

* * *

Instead of children standing in awe inside of church, they stand outside and say, "Aw, I don't want to go in." Often it is due to the lack of good example from their parents.

* * *

Good parents must give three things to their children: affection, discipline and teaching. These three things are the definition of parental Love.

Being a failure at any of these three things makes the parenthood a failure.

* * *

Talk to children - do not yell at them.

THE FAMILY

To hold a newborn baby is to hold a miracle.

* * *

Charity begins at home. If you do not treat those in your own home with Charity, it matters little how you treat others.

* * *

A popular saying is "The best thing a father can do for his children is to love their mother." This is incorrect. The best thing is to Love God. Love of his wife is not only second, but it is impossible without the first. The same is true, of course, for the mother.

* * *

By being on a religious retreat, you do not take anything away from your family: Rather, you have more to give to them when you get back home.

* * *

"Seek first the Kingdom of God." On Earth that means peace within the individual, and peace within societies. We accomplish this first by our relationship with God. We accomplish the second by our relationship with our neighbors, and that means primarily with the members of our own family.

* * *

It has been reported that one million children run away from home every year. That is explained by one or both of two reasons: the natural rebellious nature of some children (especially during their teenage years) and their lack of love and understanding by their parents.

* * *

Even though they have a life of entertainment, recreation, cars, phones, and computers, most teenagers are bored. They have not been taught that self-gratification never brings happiness. In addition, they have never been taught the satisfaction of hard work.

* * *

Neither the mother of ten, nor the mother of one, has a free minute if you listen to them tell about it.

* * *

As children get older, they should be given a little more rope - but not so much as to hang themselves or their parents.

* * *

There is a difference between physical puberty and mental

puberty. The mental puberty starts when youth are affected by the wanting of attention of the opposite sex, and even more when they think they want to be their own boss.

* * *

There are three kinds of mothers: (1) happy to be a full-time mother and the heart of the home, (2) a full-time mother who resents her vocation, and (3) a mother who works outside the home, and lets someone else raise her children. The second one needs a change in attitude, and the third one (except for the rare case of actual necessity) needs a change in values and attitude.

* * *

Children are God's continuing gift to His Earth.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

The true definition of "education" is: learning how to know Love, and serve God and getting your Soul to Heaven.

* * *

There is nothing wrong with ignorance - that only means a lack of knowledge. What is wrong is staying that way thorough your own fault.

* * *

Teachers who excludes God in teaching are not true teachers. Knowledge and Faith are complimentary - not contradictory.

* * *

When counseling, look for the solution of at a person's problem from their side as well as from your own side. Your point of view is always being on the outside and looking in.

* * *

A knife that is not used stays sharp, but is useless. One that is used daily and is never sharpened gets dull and stays that way. Only knives that are used and regularly sharpened serve a purpose. The human mind is the same way.

* * *

Originally, the purpose of education was to prepare youth for life. Now education is only a place to prepare youth for jobs. Even then, it is only in the area of job-related book knowledge, and not even in work attitudes and human interaction - much less principles, ethics, or morals.

* * *

The self-made businessman complains because he never went to college; the college man complains because he is in a rut in a white-collar job.

* * *

In religion classes, teach children and teenagers about doctrines and the carrying of their cross, because cutting cloth for banners will be nothing to fall back on in future years when doubts and crosses arise.

* * *

An "A" student may be smarter, or studies more, than a "C" student, but is he wiser?

* * *

In counseling, we should listen more and talk less - but still give them the bottom line.

* * *

It has been said: "Those who can - do; those who cannot - teach. Often it should be: Those who teach - do; those who cannot - criticize.

* * *

It is better to teach true Catholicism to one teen than watered down Catholicism to a hundred or a thousand. The Truth should be taught. (Period.)

HUMAN NATURE

The biggest battle is not with the world. The biggest battle is with your own fallen human nature. Once you basically have that under control - which takes years and years of effort, the rest of the battles are easier.

* * *

We all want to feel like someone special - either by some talent, or from some accomplishment. We should be satisfied by simply being one of God's children.

* * *

Our personality is wrapped up neither in our mind, nor in our heart. It is in our Soul. The Soul is the beginning of all the potential of all that is good in us. Our personality suffers when we deny our Soul - our supernatural connection with God. Our Soul not only gives us our conscience which helps us tell right from wrong, but also becomes reflected in our personality. Our personality, that truly unique and different character of our nature, which is simply a reflection of the state our Soul is in.

* * *

Psychologists are right about human nature and our actions and reactions - but only up to a point. Where they go wrong is when they deny that Original Sin is the cause of our tendencies to evil. They are most wrong when they deny that sin exists. It is a subtle attempt to deny that God exists.

* * *

It is fascinating to think how the road for each of us in this life is so dissimilar, and yet still similar. It is just that we are all unique individuals with all the same human nature.

* * *

The world is made up of people of different ideas, opinions, beliefs, tastes, temperaments, personalities, and talents? Who is to say which one is the best? These are also the qualities that make us different from animals.

* * *

Why is it that feeling physical pain does not usually bring back memories of other physical pain, but every feeling of mental pain brings back memories of other mental pain.

* * *

Human beings are neither all-good nor all-bad. Human beings are basically good, but because of Original Sin, we have tendencies toward evil. The conscience is an example of the good and sin is an

example of evil. No one is either all-good or all-bad. Examples are the Saint with a violent temper, or the bank robber who is kind to the elderly. We are all born with the same basic good, and the same basic tendency toward evil. How we act and react toward each is partly due to society and environment. In essence, however, the answer lies in how we use our reason and Free Will to act and react to each tendency within our society and environment.

* * *

Life on Earth is our test. The final grade will determine where we go. A's will go to Heaven, B's, C's and D's will go to Purgatory, and F's to Hell. If death suddenly dropped you out of the course of life, what grade would you end up with?

* * *

Live for Today - but prepare for Eternity.

PRIDE

There is no one blinder than those who will not see.

* * *

Most people do not want to know where they are wrong, because they would have to change, and Pride keeps them from realizing that the change is the answer to their problems.

The capital sin of Pride is not so much wanting others to think well of me, as my wanting me to think well of me. The essence of ego is my opinion of myself, which then leads to being concerned with other's opinions of me. The beginning of humility is my only being concerned with God's opinion.

* * *

When you think of past sins of Pride, be ashamed of the large ones, and laugh at yourself for the small ones.

* * *

Some people put on a big outward show of their Christianity, but do not have it interiorly. They do not work at becoming closer to God to do His Will, but they throw the name of His Son around like a name-dropper. This is like the beautifully polished hot rod with plenty of dazzling chrome and ornaments but with no engine, or one with few pistons firing. They would be indignant if you said the car was not serving a purpose other than being an attractive display. These people miss the whole point in being devout.

* * *

God, grant me enough consolation to continue to do Your work, but not so much as to continue to do Your work in Pride.

* * *

The correct order of Love is supposed to be: Love God - Love yourself - Love others. Modern psychologists want you to love yourself first - the only way to the capital sin of Pride.

* * *

In politics, it is dictators who love themselves first. In religion, it is heretics and those who start their own religions who love themselves first.

* * *

People sometimes write their own name over and over in order to subconsciously give themselves more importance.

* * *

Right intention determines the end product of action. Giving based on Charity gains Grace. Giving based on pride is a sin.

* * *

We must always be careful that our goals and ambitions do not become a slice of the cake of Pride that we cook for ourselves - and ultimately burn.

* * *

Natural fairness and supernatural fairness are not the same. As humans, we judge and evaluate by natural fairness alone. God overrules our human judgements and evaluations. Our reason tells us we should be glad that He does so; our emotions tell us otherwise. This is why the devil appeals to us primarily through our emotions. Even when he appeals to us through the sin of Pride, it is primarily through the emotional level of pride long before he appeals to the pride of the will.

* * *

People who give autographs may consciously or subconsciously place themselves above their accomplishments.

* * *

When someone says, "I know I'm not perfect," it could be a statement of Pride as well as one of Humility.

* * *

I am not only not better than anyone else, I am worse - because I think myself better.

* * *

Evangelists too often seem to be the exact opposites of the "holy man on top of the mountain." Their attitude seems to be, "God needs me to reach you," or at least, "God needs you to go through me." The truly holy person thinks, "God does not need me at all to do His work." Instead of proclaiming themselves indispensable through Pride, they proclaim unnecessary, through humility. If by the Will of God and the Free Will of another person, they are to be used as an instrument of God, then they may be sought after.

* * *

MATERIALISM

Earthly riches do not buy happiness; they often only move you away further from it.

* * *

The Golden Rule has been smothered by hands reaching for gold.

* * *

In this life you can either grow slowly toward what God wants you to be, or you shrink away from it and become absorbed by the world around you.

* * *

Ironically most people have moved away from God in this country because God has been so good to them. They do not feel as if they need God in their lives. It seems that these people only go to God because of adversity.

That time will come again.

* * *

The world seems to revolve around money. Far too many people spin around on that merry-go-round, lead a dizzying life, and never get anywhere.

* * *

Some people can stay in bad health because they worry about money. They may go to a doctor who cures it with a miracle drug. The next day they get his bill, and the cycle starts again.

* * *

Workmen in Europe during the Middle Ages spent as much time on the roof of a cathedral as the ceiling, because God could see the roof. That type of attitude has been replaced by "Take the money and run."

* * *

A man's philosophy, not his income - determines how he lives.

* * *

The only way for this country to ever start really being Christian, is for people to spend at least half as much time concerned about the condition of their Souls, as they do about the conditions of their automobiles.

* * *

The "older generation" came from the depression - Instead of turning to God, many turned to making money and living as comfortable a life as possible. As a generation, they succeeded - but was it really success?

* * *

Today's "younger generation" rejects much of the materialism and what it stands for, but instead of turning to God they turn to sex and drugs. Both generations criticize each other, but neither has the right answer.

* * *

People do not bow down before golden calves anymore - now it's golden jewelry or gold coins.

* * *

It is not possible to concentrate on becoming more spiritualistic and more materialistic at the same time.

MODERN DAY LIVING

Simplify your life and you will simplify your ambitions; or simplify your ambitions and you will simplify your life.

* * *

Many people take careful aim at what they want in their life. Unfortunately, they may be aiming at the wrong target. The closer they get to the center of that wrong target, the further they are from the true target, which is Christ.

* * *

The peaceful life is characterized by a greater appreciation of the world of grass and trees than the world of glass and cement.

* * *

There is a psychological difference in thinking that stealing is right, and stealing is not wrong. The first leaves no exceptions, and even the conscience of the Soul in Mortal Sin will not believe that. The second, however, must necessarily be based on a rationalization to be stated that way, and rationalization feeds on exceptions and situation ethics. The same thinking is true for all sins.

* * *

It does no good to wish you had lived at another time in history. No time was perfect, and your situation could have been worse in another era.

* * *

Mistakes can be worse than a sin, as far as natural penalties on Earth are concerned.

* * *

The only thing some people know about "The Ten Commandments" is that it was a good motion picture.

* * *

We cannot legislate private morality, but we can and should legislate public morality. We should definitely separate church and state, but we should absolutely not separate God and state.

* * *

The good qualities of mankind are like the good qualities of nature - often hidden by man-made skyscrapers.

* * *

The most miserable person in the world is someone who has "nothing to do."

* * *

In most cases, the teenagers who remain moral about sex do so because of fear: of God's punishments, or pregnancy, or parent's reprisals - not because of Love of God and his plan for sex.

* * *

Pornography is degrading, because it isolates the sexual instinct from Love.

* * *

In the days after Christ died, everything was relatively simple. Christians knew who their friends and their enemies were. They also knew results of being Christian, and any martyrdom was accomplished rather quickly. Now your "friends" can also be your enemies, the results are many and varied, and martyrdom takes a lifetime.

* * *

Do you ever feel like the whole world is a wheat field, but you always get the chaff?

* * *

"Deny thyself." There is a difference between denying yourself the legitimate use of a gift of God and denying that it exists. Examples of the former are priests who deny themselves a sexual drive and nuns who deny themselves the satisfaction of their maternal instinct.

In the secular world, men deny that the sex drive can be controlled (in sex crimes) and women deny that a maternal instinct exists (in abortion).

* * *

The only time some women wear a modest dress is if they are getting married or getting buried. (And less and less when getting married.)

* * *

The concept of future is only an imagined reality. Tomorrow is only an optimistic uncertainty. We can only hope that the future today's are better than the present today.

Except for supernatural reasons, why is there a today? Life in the 1990's has almost become an exercise in frustration and futility. Without the goal of Heaven, our lives would have little purpose, and little reason to continue it. That is the most often reason for suicide.

* * *

Men would serve God better, and be happier, if they were always after "peace" instead of always after "a piece."

* * *

God gave us four seasons to remind us that our lives are somewhat like the seasons. While they are in a constant state of change, they always contain, and always return to the same basic elements over and over.

While we can do something positive and spiritual in changing our lives, we spend more time thinking and talking about the weather.

COMMON SENSE

A building is proof there is a man. A tree is proof there is a God.

* * *

Everything God created is good. The first thing He created was silence.

* * *

Man's best friend is not a dog. It is the Truth.

* * *

Nothing is so powerful as an idea whose time has come. Unfortunately, this holds true for bad ideas as well as good ones.

* * *

If there was one-half as much common sense in this world as there is knowledge, the world would be twice as good. And we would be four times better off if we had one-tenth as much wisdom.

* * *

If evolution made sense, then why are human beings the most helpless creatures at birth, and not the most self-supporting?

* * *

Half of the hassle in our lives is created for us. We create the other half.

* * *

Saying that something is good because of a few specific cases of good coming out of it, and not looking at the whole when judging it, is like saying that it was okay for Adam to eat the apple and sin against God because he *did* get some nutritional value and vitamins from the apple.

* * *

A smile a day keeps the frowns away.

* * *

Smile and the world smiles with you. Laugh and the world laughs with you. Cry and you cry alone.

* * *

Hard work, not excuses, make winners out of losers.

* * *

One cannot believe in both life after death and atheistic evolution.

* * *

Atheism and evolution are two subjects that go hand-in-hand, or actually, foot-in-mouth.

* * *

Suppose we could get rid of all weeds by giving up all grass. We could get rid of mosquitoes by giving up all birds. We could get rid of pain by giving up all pleasure. We could get rid of all that is bad by giving up all that is good. There would not be much left in this world. What we have to learn to do is to pull up the weeds so the grass will grow, bear with the mosquitoes sometimes to have the beauty of the birds always; accept the pain to make us more appreciate the pleasures; and sometimes look past the bad in the world to be able to see the good that is there.

* * *

Separation of church and state was invented by man, not set-up by God. There is nothing wrong with this unless we try to separate God and state. The constant degrading of our society can be attributed to that happening.

* * *

In the arts, there are only the upper and lower income groups. Being in the upper group means that you are successful; it does not necessarily mean you have any talent.

* * *

If and when God punishes the world again for sin, one of the biggest effects of it will be the simplifying of life on this planet. That, in itself, will cause there to be less sins being advertised and even less temptations being advertised.

* * *

Practice may never make anything perfect, but it does make the next practice much easier.

* * *

The grass may be greener on the other side of the fence, but your side needs cutting just as often.

* * *

Nowadays teenagers are being told that premarital sex is not a sin. They have the pill, and their parents are too busy to guide them in regards to their companionships and activities. It is probably more difficult now to be a pure and chaste teenager than at any other time in history. Since God knows this, His reward for the pure and chaste is greater than for any other time also.

* * *

In this life you can either grow slowly toward what God wants you to be, or you shrink away from it and become absorbed by the world around you.

* * *

While there are numerous occasions when one cannot see the forest for the trees, there is at least one occasion where it is non-productive to see the forest instead of the trees. That occasion is when the forest is the entire human race and the tree is one individual in it. While one must consider the whole forest (or the society of civilization in which the individual lives) as a partial understanding of the cause of the situation that the individual finds himself in, one must not forget that the well-being of this one, simple, individual human being is the concern - no matter how small or indirect - of every other individual human being on this earth.

* * *

When the true God-given rights (not to be refused with privileges) of one individual is denied, there is a loss of respect to the whole of mankind, and a first step to the denial of God-given rights to all. The first and most important God-given right that is being denied individually today, is the right-to-life. It is much too easy for us, even those of us who are strongly pro-life, to lose the significance of one life lost and its total potential to God, to himself, and to mankind, by simply adding him to the total number of abortions. Essence is being lost in statistics. Significance is being lost in numbers.

* * *

As the world becomes more complicated, our reaction to it becomes more complicated. This makes us more complicated, which makes our understanding of ourself and others more complicated.

* * *

Once people recognize the benefit of silence and solitude, they should make a point to spend at least thirty minutes a day in it, in order to regularly experience its serenity.

PRACTICAL WISDOM

The bright artificial light of half-truths can blind us to the pure light of truth.

* * *

Everyone has a right to his own opinion, but that does not mean that everyone's opinion is right.

* * *

The virtue of patience comes from the effort of tolerance.

* * *

A "good conscience" is often a mound of whipped cream so thick and so high that you cannot see what is under it.

* * *

The largest gap in the world is the one between intention and action.

* * *

When one begins speech training, there is a tendency to go around correcting everyone else's speech. When one begins spiritual training, there is a tendency to want to go around and reform the world. No matter how many times we read the Serenity Prayer, it can never be enough, because every day it has a new meaning to be attached to something or someone in our lives.

* * *

School notes are worthless because they are thrown away after the test. No future tests mean no future use for notes. Spiritual notes should be kept, however, because the tests of life come again and again.

* * *

A person sometimes says, "I'll love you forever and ever" in order to convince themselves that they will keep that feeling "forever".

* * *

Finding a practical answer to a moral question is easy. However, these easy answers may not be according to God's laws, which are not always easy to follow.

* * *

"Old habits are hard to change" can be both a statement and an explanation of some of our actions. It should not be an excuse, however, for old habits that should be changed.

* * *

It often helps just to realize what you do not understand.
That can make you depend on God even more.

* * *

Yesterday's accomplishments are past and yesterday's
mistakes are past - only today counts. Not only is today the first
day of the rest of your life, today is your life.

* * *

All that is religious is relevant. All that is relevant is not
religious.

* * *

Simple blind Faith is good for some and necessary for
others. The more you want to understand and the more you try to
understand, the more you realize what and how much you will
never understand. To have one question and no answer can leave
us a little frustrated; to have a hundred questions and no answers
can leave you more frustrated.

* * *

Thinking about mistakes of the past is only good if it
teaches us something we use in the present or in the future.

* * *

If you do not know where you are going, you certainly can
not get there. And if you never thought about all the different
roads to get somewhere, you certainly can not be sure about
choosing the best one.

* * *

Knowledge tells us what we know; wisdom tells us what
we do not know. Science only asks questions it can answer;
religion asks questions that only God can answer.

* * *

There is a large gap between being a lot smart and a little
wise.

* * *

Unless you have a strong Faith and a strong background in
theology, reading about errors in dogmatic thinking can accomplish
little except temptation, doubts, and eventually disbelief.

* * *

Organizations sponsor athletic and other contests for youth
and give big trophies to the winners, when what the both winners
and losers need is simply a hug or even a pat on the head. It just

depends on whether you are encouraging either pride or humility.

* * *

One of the hardest things in this life is knowing the difference between what you are, what you want to be, and what you can be.

* * *

It would be better to: Pray more and read less, Read more and think less; Think more and write less; Write more and talk less.

* * *

It is better to do little with the right intention, rather than much with the wrong intention.

BEING HUMAN

One of the great misconceptions of modern times is using the word "need", when the correct word is "want."

* * *

It is far easier to avoid sin than to do good. Those two concepts neither go together, nor are mutually exclusive.

* * *

The ability to love is a creative talent. Even when not used over a long period of time, the ability is still there. As with a talent to write, to act, to paint, or to teach, it can be turned on at will. Not being able to use a talent makes us frustrated. Having no one to love makes us live without natural hope.

* * *

So you think you are always right. You should think so. That does not mean, however, that you always are right. Keep an open mind.

* * *

Every person has an innate need of leaving something on this earth that will last, some kind of mark that will endure - a kind of evidence that their life and work had meaning.

Some want to leave as their mark, an idea or a thought. Some want to leave a building or structure that will stand long after they are gone. Others want to leave a simpler "mark" - so they carve up trees, benches, chairs and rocks with their initials and write their names on bridges, monuments, in cement, and on the walls of caves. It is a subconscious attempt to show the world "I have been here" and "I am a part of something greater, and longer-lasting than myself." It is but a material attempt to be more than we are, which is part of that sense of longing that we have for the divine - to know and understand God.

* * *

"Old habits are hard to change" can be both a truism and an explanation of present actions. It should not, however, be an excuse for not changing them if they need changing.

* * *

"My problems are worse than yours" can be a statement of fact, but it can also be a statement of self-pity.

* * *

Females who dress immodestly and say, "If it tempts men, they should not look," is like them putting a cigarette out in a man's hand and telling him it would not burn if he did not think about it. Both are natural reactions and he has little control over either one.

* * *

Every time a man takes a leaf off a tree and folds it, rubs it, and crushes it between his fingers, it is a subconscious effort at connecting himself to the tangible world. It is really a conscious communication with the wonders of nature that God created. It is a subconscious awareness that this world was made for our use and enjoyment.

* * *

The point in time when we think we are not susceptible to a particular temptation may also be the same point at which we are the most susceptible to it.

* * *

Sex is like chocolate. One can live without it, but once introduced, it can be very habit forming.

* * *

It seems that the human race in general (and Americans in specific) have become so spiritually soft that we have come to think of small inconveniences as large crosses. We loudly lament the fact that we are sick in bed for a day or two, and do not thank God for the fact that we are well the rest of the time. We feel sorry for ourselves for being laid off of work at one job, instead of thanking God that we are able to work and to find another job. We envy others for their high standard of living instead of thanking God that our own standard is higher than 99% of the rest of the people in this world. We complain about the problems of children, instead of finding joy in them and thanking God that He allows us to share in the creation of His little ones.

* * *

The giving of a ring is not so much to lay claim to someone, as an attempt sometimes to make permanent the temporary feeling that exists. Going steady too early in a relationship does the same thing. It is an attempt to tie together the emotions of two people who under reason should be broadening their horizons, not narrowing them. It also ties together two people who might naturally drift more apart if it were not for the official bond of "going steady". It is like lashing two ships together during the storm of high school and college. Tied together, they can cause much damage or delay to each other in the natural process of emotional, mental, and spiritual maturity.

Going steady too young is giving up much of the possibility of long-term happiness for temporary security and buoyant emotions. It is a gamble. The past unhappy experiences of millions of people is the dealer, but everyone still wants to bet against the house. The poor house is filled with people who ignored the odds in gambling - and so are the divorce courts.

* * *

A common cycle of life: Idealist to Optimist to Cynic to Pessimist to Realist.

* * *

Things can always be better; things can always be worse. That is not the definition of life, but it is a definition of life as it will always be.

OFFER IT UP

Suffering is not a problem; it is a mystery. Problems have answers; mysteries do not.

* * *

Every time you have to do something unpleasant, you have a chance to offer a sacrifice to God.

* * *

Surrounding the life of loneliness and pain is always the hope of love and joy. It helps to know that there are no perfect solutions to your problems. The only thing you can do is ask God to help you accept them, and "*Offer it up.*"

* * *

Strenuous exercise is a mortification of the flesh if it is mainly for our physical and mental health. If it is purely for vanity or glory, then it is a glorification of the flesh. It is the purpose that decides the true worth, not just the results.

* * *

If you hit your thumb with a hammer, do not curse. Instead, say "I offer it up." Let your pain be a penance, instead of having to do penance because of the pain.

* * *

If a pearl can come from a sick oyster, then your sufferings can make you a Saint.

* * *

A thorn cursed as a thorn, remains a thorn. A thorn offered to God becomes a rose.

* * *

Lent reminds us that we must do penance as well as pray. Prayer can easily satisfy the emotions; penance does not. Whether or not we do penance is a test of our true devotion to God.

* * *

Lent is a time of extra penance, when we again are reminded to increase our Faith and devotion and good works. Easter Sunday is supposed to be a celebration of beginning of a better spiritual life, not just a celebration that Lent is over.

* * *

For an increased spiritual life to be accomplished, it must be preceded by a time of penance - the forty days of Lent. Christ's joy, glory, and victory through His resurrection was accomplished

because of its precedent of trials, sufferings, and the carrying of His Cross.

* * *

God never intends our path to Him to be any easier than the one He had for His own son. Both include suffering. To want it to be easier is human nature; to expect it to be easier is human folly; to make it easier by following our own will is human sin.

The test is great, but the reward for passing it is greater.

* * *

The secret of saving our Souls is to offer God what He wants - not what we want.

* * *

Grace is received when offering up difficult things, not easy things.

RETREATS AND REINFORCEMENT

There are three benefits of a religious retreat: 1) Physical silence, 2) Mental release and Spiritual help.

* * *

The good intentions to lead a life according to God's Will, still needs daily reinforcement.

* * *

Even when your life is good, a retreat is good preventive medicine. A shot of spiritual uplift can help you avoid the virus of spiritual apathy.

* * *

Some people are afraid of religion because they fear that "becoming religious" will cause them to not be able to be themselves anymore, or stop them from having fun. The effect is just the opposite. You cannot truly "be yourself" until you become more of what God wants you to be, and this you cannot be until you turn away from the world. At that time, fun becomes a bonus - not a basis of life.

* * *

If you are just as troubled, or forlorn, or depressed as you were on the first day of a retreat, as you were the year before, you did not put into practice what you learned the last time.

* * *

Meditate every day during Lent for 15 minutes on one of the Stations of the Cross. Pick the one with which you can empathize the most.

* * *

It is good to read a good spiritual book more than once, because you should not be at the same place when you finish it as you were when you started it. Wait a year or two and then read it again. You may even get more out of it the second time.

* * *

Advice from a spiritual director is sometimes temporary, unless we write it down to remember it - and put it into practice again.

* * *

Persuasion is not just a matter of being convinced - it means action because of it. Therefore, persuasion needs reinforcement. If you are convinced, but do not act, you are not persuaded. And if you act over a period of time and then stop, you are not less convinced. You just have not been reinforced or have not reinforced yourself.

* * *

Many people do not want to go on a religious retreat. It is not because they are afraid of finding out something about God; they are afraid of finding out something about themselves.

* * *

We need positive reinforcement from the world for our temporal life. Spiritual reinforcement comes from God when you ask for it through prayer.

* * *

Religious reading is spiritual medicine for mental bruises.

THINK ABOUT IT

Love is the most misused and most misunderstood word in any language.

* * *

One of the most difficult tasks in the world is for someone who really knows, to convince someone who thinks they know, that they really don't know.

* * *

We do seem to have a permanent recession in this country - a recession of Charity.

* * *

The Soul seeks joy; the body seeks pleasure. The second becomes a counterfeit of the first.

* * *

Only Someone who has laughed can write about humor. Only Someone who has felt happiness can write about joy. Only Someone who has suffered can write about pain. And only Someone who has cared deeply can write about love. Is everyone Someone?

* * *

Finding the truth can be easy. The first difficulty comes in accepting it, the second difficulty is living it.

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God did not make a mistake when he made men and women. It is just that men and women have made a mistake with what God made them.

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In general, females of average appearance are nicer in than females of great beauty because they are not as concerned with their own vanity. They look outward instead of inward for enjoyment, and satisfaction, and happiness.

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Christ's death on the cross did not "take away our sins" as much as it took away the normal damnation that these sins would ordinarily earn.

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Any writing about God is spiritual writing, and any spiritual writing is a prayer.

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If you had to describe yourself in one word, it should be: Sinner.

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Is there such a thing as a happy philosopher, or is that a contradiction in terms? The question is: Does being unhappy make you more of a philosopher, or can being a philosopher make it more likely for you to be unhappy?

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If you lived at the time of Christ would the familiar phrase be, "a doubting (Your Name)".

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If, as a rule, you believe that there is "an exception to every rule," then you must believe that there is an exception to that rule, which would mean that you believe that some rules have no exception. Think about it.

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Was Hitler, you with an opportunity?

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There are sometimes more "miracles of healing" at one revival meeting or in ten minutes of a "Born Again" television show, than Christ performed in all three years of His ministry. Is it not amazing how God is supposed to "use modern evangelists" even more than He used His own Son?

* * *

People are what God gave them, and what they made themselves out of what God gave them. People should not give autographs. Their name is only a label. A more accurate autograph would be, "God and perseverance" or "God and hard work" or in some cases, "God and political pull".

The Saints would probably sign themselves "God and suffering", or "God and prayer", or "God and Charity."

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Thinking is in the field of feeling; writing is in the field of expression. The true writer often simply expresses what he feels.

* * *

An ill wind can uproot the largest tree in the world whose roots are embedded deep and wide into the ground. We must sink our roots into Faith and Hope in God and not into this Earth, if we intend to withstand the ill winds in our lives.

* * *

Not to know is bad, but to know and not be able to use the knowledge is worse.

* * *

Purpose precedes existence. God wants man to think, and the purpose of a thought precedes its existence. The purpose also determines the value and morality of the thought.

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Humility is to see yourself as you are - no more and no less. It is to give credit where it is due - to God for ability, to yourself for using it.

* * *

The only answer to the question of the meaning of life, is in looking at life in its totality as the means of God has chosen to test us for our worthiness to the reward of Heaven. Looking at it in its separate aspects can often make it look absurd, ridiculous, and without purpose.

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Virtue is not the absence of sin - it is the opposite of it.

THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

Most people disassociate religion from their everyday life. Religion is something they take care of once a week for an hour on Sunday.

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A good spiritual director is like a good surgeon. He cuts cleanly and deeply (by telling you what you need to be told), and after seeing the cancer removed (your sins by true contrition), sews you up (with absolution), so you can heal.

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It is hard to be totally wrong; it is hard to be totally right. We all fall somewhere in between the two. One fault in our nature is that we are always looking back and comparing ourselves to the sinners behind us, instead of the Saints in front of us.

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A good silent retreat may be the closest thing on earth today, that a man can experience, that compares to Adam's first days in the Garden of Eden.

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Spiritual neutrality - a time of no consolation and no spiritual desolation.

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A good counselor helps you with your spiritual problems before helping you with your personal problems. Personal problems are not an excuse for not having a good spiritual life - they are a reason for it.

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Those who are afraid of silence, or being alone, may have little spiritual life. If so, this is their fault - not God's.

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Religion today seems to have meaning for only the young and the old - the ones who may need it the least.

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Everyone wants to be No. 1 in something. Would it not be nice if they wanted to be No. 1 in Prayer, Penance, Sacrifice or Good Works?

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In times of spiritual dryness, pray more - not less.

