

Spiritual Bouquet: Of everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required; and of him to whom they have entrusted much, they will demand the more. St. Luke 12:48

SAINT JOAN of ARC

Virgin, Martyr and Patron Saint of France
(1412-1431)

Who today does not know the history of the Maid of Orleans, who saved France from the foreign domination of the English, only to be betrayed by the legitimate prince whom her efforts had crowned at Rheims, then burnt at the stake on May 30, 1431? Both in the French and English languages, many books and articles have honored her since her canonization in 1920 by Pope Benedict XV.

The Holy Father spoke before the bishop of Orleans and others present for the reading of the decree which approved her two final great miracles, needed to proceed with the canonization. He said, "We find the memory of Joan of Arc so apt to enkindle love in the French people for their mother country, that we regret being French only in our heart!" Many others could say the same, and confirm the exactitude of the proverb: "Every Christian has two mother countries — the one where he or she first saw the light of day, and France!"

Two years later, Pope Pius XI declared Saint Joan patroness of France with the Most Blessed Virgin, placing her second only to the Mother of God. In that year Monsignor Baudrillart, French historian, wrote that Saint Joan of Arc may be proposed as an example to all young children by her perfect piety; as a model of fidelity to the call of heaven, to all young persons. For artisans, scholars, writers, teachers, she gives excellent example by her respect for truth and her remarkable prudence. Those dedicated to the works of mercy should find inspiration in her charity, visible when she consoled and wept for her wounded and dying enemies. All agricultural workers can invoke her with confidence, for when Joan, with the archbishop of Rheims, rode through the rich fields in the month of August and saw the reapers at work, she expressed a wish, despite the honors she then enjoyed, to die in the midst of the country-folk of France whom she loved. Her illness in prison, her martyrdom in the flames, recommend her intercession to the sick, as also to all who pray for loved ones in purgatory.

"Finally," Monsignor Baudrillart concluded, "we pray our new Patroness to intercede unceasingly with God and the Most Blessed Virgin that France, its thoughts turned towards the true liberty of God's children and its own ancient dignity, may truly be today as before, the *firstborn daughter of the Church*." For centuries that title — conferred because of the early conversion of King Clovis and three thousand of his noble soldiers, baptized on Christmas day of 496 — was the glory of Christian France. It was later magnificently renewed and embellished by the heroic virgin, Joan of Arc.



Handmaids of Christ and Children of Mary

Supplement to the Bulletin of the Eucharistic Crusade in Ireland

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Month dedicated to Our Lady

This leaflet is intended for high-school girls. Being part of the Eucharistic Crusade, you receive the bulletin of the Crusade and pray for the intentions of the Crusade. As girls, Our Lady is your special model. Therefore as well as being Crusaders and Handmaids of Christ, you are also Children of Mary. The purpose of these few pages is to help you in your spiritual life.

AN EASY WAY TO BECOME A SAINT By Fr Paul O'Sullivan, OP

Chapter 7 - WE MUST DO EVERYTHING FOR THE LOVE OF GOD

St. Paul is the great master of the spiritual life. No one can teach us better than he how to become a Saint. Here are his very words: "Whatever you do in word or work, do all in the Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ." Lest we may think that the Apostle is speaking only of offering our spiritual acts to God, he goes into particulars and says: "Whether you eat or whether you drink, or whatever else you do, do all for Our Lord Jesus Christ."

There are no acts more material, more necessary, than eating and drinking. Therefore, St. Paul mentions these to show us that we must do everything for the love of God.

Take these words, Dear Reader, as directed to yourself by the Apostle, and you have at once another great secret of sanctity. To do this, it is not necessary to add one iota to your prayers or devotions; you have merely to form the intention of offering your every action for the love of God. This makes your every work meritorious. All your acts give pleasure and glory to God. It does not matter whether you succeed or fail in your enterprises; your acts have the same merit. Thus, the countless acts of every day are pleasing God and earning for us rewards for all eternity. On the other hand, if we neglect to follow this rule of the Apostle, all our acts are worthless. We deprive ourselves of wonderful rewards, and we rob God of His glory and pleasure.

Think for a moment on the long lives of 50, 60, 70 years, every day of which is full of energy and activities----but all are lost if we do not offer them to God!

Do not think, Dear Reader, that what St. Paul recommends is impracticable or

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impossible, a thing that only Saints can do. There is no difficulty whatever in offering our acts to God, and there is nothing more consoling, nothing more meritorious.

HOW TO GIVE EVERY ACTION THIS INESTIMABLE VALUE

The first act of every good Christian in the morning is to fall on his knees and make his Morning Offering. It can be done in this wise: "O Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I offer Thee all my prayers, works, joys and sufferings of this day, for all the intentions of Thy Sacred Heart in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world, and in reparation for my sins. I offer them particularly **for the intentions of the Eucharistic Crusade**. Every breath I draw, every beating of my heart, every glance of my eyes, every step I take, every single act I do, I wish to be an act of love for Thee." This little act takes *one minute*, but it must be done slowly and with full deliberation. We must mean what we say. It is a short act, but it gives immense value to every action. Our every act, as a consequence, gives glory to God and receives a distinct reward in Heaven. This offering has still more value if, from time to time during the day, we renew it by saying briefly: "All for Thee, dear Lord."

Who can be so foolish as to neglect this sacred obligation, yet many make the act in a careless, distracted fashion. Some do not make it at all! All the Saints and holy writers attach the gravest importance to the Morning Offering.

Instruction upon meditation

Meditation, or mental prayer, is a devout and fruitful consideration of Divine things, and of all that is conducive to the acquirement of virtue and of eternal salvation. It is not a difficult exercise; it requires attention and reflection, a desire to know God better in order to love Him more. It should be done in the company of Our Lady, the saints and our guardian Angel.

Refer to the previous issues of this bulletin to learn how to make meditation properly. Remember that as Handmaid, you promised to meditate 15 minutes every day. St Teresa of Avila says that he who spends 15mn a day in mental prayer cannot be lost.

Happy eyes which are shut to outward things, but intent on things internal. Happy they who penetrate into internal things, and endeavor to prepare themselves more and more by daily exercises for the receiving of heavenly secrets.

Imitation of Christ, Book 3, Chapter 1 "On the Internal Discourse of Christ to the Faithful Soul"

Meditation – On the Prodigal Son - 1

This thoughtless youth, seduced by a flattering notion of liberty, and a desire of doing his own will, foolishly left his father's house for a foreign land. This represents the conduct of a Christian, who, having been educated in piety, grows weary of restraint, indulges his own corrupt inclinations, and resolves to gratify them in the follies of a dissipated world. It is also the

image of a soul, which, having been favoured with great graces, gradually sinks into tepidity by sloth in spiritual duties, by forgetfulness of God; hence arise a fondness for independence, frequent venial sins, and imminent danger of mortal sin.

Principal practices of devotion to Mary

by St Louis-Marie Grignon de Montfort

There are several interior practices of true devotion to the Blessed Virgin. Here briefly are the main ones:

- (1) Honouring her, as the worthy Mother of God, by the cult of hyperdulia, that is, esteeming and honouring her more than all the other saints as the masterpiece of grace and the foremost in holiness after Jesus Christ, true God and true man.
- (2) Meditating on her virtues, her privileges and her actions.
- (3) Contemplating her sublime dignity.
- (4) Offering to her acts of love, praise and gratitude.
- (5) Invoking her with a joyful heart.
- (6) Offering ourselves to her and uniting ourselves to her.
- (7) Doing everything to please her.
- (8) Beginning, carrying out and completing our actions through her, in her, with her, and for her in order to do them through Jesus, in Jesus, with Jesus, and for Jesus, our last end. We shall explain this last practice later.

True devotion to our Lady has also several exterior practices. Here are the principal ones:

- (1) Enrolling in her confraternities and joining her sodalities.
- (2) Joining religious orders dedicated to her.
- (3) Making her privileges known and appreciated.
- (4) Giving alms, fasting, performing interior and exterior acts of self-denial in her honour.
- (5) Carrying such signs of devotion to her as the rosary, the scapular, or a little chain.
- (6) Reciting with attention, devotion and reverence the fifteen decades of the Rosary into heaven, the Crowning of Mary by the Blessed Trinity.
- (7) Singing hymns to her or teaching others to sing them.
- (8) Genuflecting or bowing to her each morning while saying for example sixty or a hundred times, "Hail Mary, Virgin most faithful", so that through her intercession with God we may faithfully correspond with his graces throughout the day; and in the evening saying "Hail Mary, Mother of Mercy", asking her to obtain God's pardon for the sins we have committed during the day.
- (9) Taking charge of her confraternities, decorating her altars, crowning and adorning her statues.
- (10) Carrying her statues or having others carry them in procession, or keeping a small one on one's person as an effective protection against the evil one.
- (11) Having statues made of her, or her name engraved and placed on the walls of churches or houses and on the gates and entrances of towns, churches and houses.
- (12) Solemnly giving oneself to her by a special consecration.