

# My Catholic Faith

## Chapter 1. Religion and the End of Man

In creating us, God gave us the power and right to choose which path we should follow in life: either the path of obedience, or the path of disobedience to His commandments. The first seems wearisome and full of thorns, but reward comes in the end: happiness with God. The second seems full of pleasures and roses, but punishment awaits the traveler at the end: eternal damnation in hell.



Each must choose for himself. We may find the choice a hard struggle. We shall be strengthened in the choice of the difficult path if we remember that we belong to God, that He loves us, that He will help us and is waiting for us at the end of the road -- of obedience.

## A - What is the destiny of man?

Man's high destiny is to go to God, because man comes from God, and belongs entirely to God.

- \* Our reason tells us that Someone *made* us. That Someone is God. Nothing can proceed from *nothing*. If there had ever been a moment when nothing existed, nothing would ever have existed. Therefore, because we exist, we know Someone who made us also exists; that Someone is God. "He made us, and not we ourselves" (Ps. 99:3). "All things have been created through and unto Him" (Col. 1:16)
- \* Our reason also tells us that God must have made us for some purpose. God made man to *know* Him, to *love* Him, and to *serve* Him in this world, and to be happy forever with Him in the next. God made us for Himself. The *end* of man, as of all creation, is the glory of God; to manifest the divine perfections, to proclaim the goodness, majesty, and power of God. "The Lord hath made all things for Himself" (Prov. 16:4). Whether he wishes to or not, man must manifest God's perfections, dominion, and glory. Man's very existence does this; even his sins will in the end show forth God's infinite holiness and justice.
- \* Through glorifying God, man is *destined* to share His everlasting happiness in heaven. Man was created chiefly for the life beyond the grave; this present one is merely a preparation for the eternal life. In this life we are exiles, wanderers, pilgrims. Heaven, the Home of God, is our true country, our true Home. There God wants to share with us His own unmeasured bliss. "For here we have no permanent city, but we seek for the city that is to come" (Heb. 13:14)

We belong to God. Since we are His creatures, we have certain *duties towards* God which we must fulfill. Religion teaches us what these duties are.



## Handmaids of Christ and Children of Mary

Supplement to the Bulletin of the Eucharistic Crusade in Ireland

February 2010

Month of the Purification of Our Lady

**T**his 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 9 - READING - 1

Another easy and effective way of arriving at an eminent degree of holiness is spiritual reading.

We have pointed out that the reason for so little sanctity in many souls is not weakness or malice, but ignorance. Spiritual reading dispels this ignorance and helps us to feel all the charm and consolation of God's blessed love.

Every Catholic should without fail make spiritual reading daily for ten or fifteen minutes. The neglect of this duty is disastrous.

To derive benefit from our reading, we must observe the following rules, which will not only secure satisfactory results but will make our reading attractive and a real pleasure.

Read books that appeal to you. It is of elementary prudence to choose proper books, for not every good and excellent book suits all readers.

It must be our aim to find a book or books that make an appeal to us personally, that will grip our attention and act as a driving force, a stimulant to our energies.

Pray before reading. Next, it is well to say a short prayer, one Hail Mary, before commencing our reading, asking Our Blessed Lady to help us to understand what we are reading and to put it into practice. St. Thomas Aquinas told his fellow Dominican,

Father Reginald, that he got his great treasures of knowledge more by prayer than by study.

Read your book not once but many times. It is a fatal mistake to read a book quickly or to read it only once. That produces very little good. We must not read a spiritual book as we read a romance. However well-written a book may be, the truths it presents are so great that our poor weak minds only succeed in grasping them little by little.

It may treat of the first of all truths, viz., the love of God. Nothing seems easier to understand than that, yet daily experience shows how very vaguely and insufficiently this wonderful doctrine is grasped and, as a consequence, how very little God is loved.

One book read slowly does us more good than a hundred read hurriedly.

## 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.*

**R**ead such matters as may produce compunction rather than give occupation. If thou wilt withdraw from superfluous talking, and idle visitings, and from hearing new things and rumors, thou wilt find time sufficient and proper to spend in good meditations.

*Imitation of Christ, Book 1, Chapter 20 "Of the Love of Solitude and Silence"*

## Meditation – On the Kingdom of Christ - 3

Consider the means by which these enemies are vanquished. Your King has taught you by His own practice and in His Gospel. He teaches humility in His Incarnation; in His birth from a poor mother; in living unnoticed in a lowly station of life. He particularly requires of you to learn from all His outward actions the inward meekness of His Sacred Heart. He teaches poverty in His birth. He sanctifies it in His lessons, and promises the Kingdom of Heaven as its reward. He teaches mortification in every instant of His life, from His birth to His tomb. He teaches obedience to persons of every sort, from His Nativity to His death on the Cross. He teaches the love and practice of prayer; love of God and our neighbour; and entire forgiveness of enemies. What an armoury of virtues! Resolve to imitate them, especially during Lent.

## SAINT DOROTHY

Virgin and Martyr (†304)

Feastday : February 6<sup>th</sup>



**S**aint Dorothy was a young virgin celebrated already in Caesarea of Cappadocia, where she lived, for her angelic virtue. Her parents are believed to have been martyred before her in the Diocletian persecution; thus, when the Governor Sapricius came to Caesarea and called her to appear before him, he sent this child of martyrs to the eternal home where they were waiting for her.

She explained that the God she adored was majestic — above all emperors, who were mortal, and their gods, none of whom created either heaven or earth. She was stretched upon the rack, and offered honours if she would consent to sacrifice, or death if she refused. And they waited. She asked why they delayed to torture her; they were expecting she might cede out of fright. She said to them, “Do what you have to do, that I may see the One for whose love I fear neither death nor torments, Jesus Christ.” She was asked, “Where is this Christ?” and she replied: “As Almighty He is everywhere, but for weak human reason we say that the Son of God has ascended into heaven, to be seated at the right hand of the Almighty Father. It is He who invites us to the garden of His delights, where at all times the trees are covered with fruits, the lilies are perpetually white, the roses ever in their freshness. If you believe me, you too will search for the true liberty, and will labor to earn entry into the garden of God’s delights.” She was then placed in the custody of two women who had fallen away from the faith, in the hope that they might pervert her; but the fire of her own heart rekindled the flame in theirs, and led them back to Christ.

When she was set once more on the rack, Sapricius himself was amazed at the heavenly expression on her face, and asked her the cause of her joy. “Because,” she said, “I have brought back two souls to Christ, and because I shall soon be in heaven rejoicing with the Angels.” Her joy grew as she was buffeted in the face and her sides were burned with plates of red-hot iron. “Blessed art Thou,” she cried, when she was sentenced to be beheaded, “Blessed art Thou, O Lover of souls, who call me to paradise, and invite me to Thy nuptial chamber!”

Saint Dorothy suffered in mid-winter, and on the road to her execution a lawyer called Theophilus, who had grown accustomed to calumniating and persecuting the Christians, asked her, in mockery, to send him “apples or roses from the garden of her Spouse.” The Saint promised to grant his request. Just before she died, a little child stood by her side bearing three apples and three roses. She told him to take them to Theophilus, and to tell him it was the present he sought from the garden of her Spouse. Saint Dorothy had gone to heaven, and Theophilus was still making merry over his challenge to her, when the child entered his room. He recognized that the fruit and flowers were of no earthly growth, and that the child was an Angel in disguise. He was converted to the faith, and then shared in the martyrdom of Saint Dorothy.

**R**eflection. Do you wish to be safe amid the pleasures and happy despite the troubles of this world? Pray for heavenly desires, and say with the Saints, “Paradise, paradise!”

Saint Dorothy is the patron Saint of  
brewers, brides, florists, gardeners, midwives and newlyweds.