

# My Daily Bread

A Summary of  
The Spiritual Life

Simplified and Arranged  
for Daily  
Reading, Reflection  
and Prayer

BY  
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1954

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## Foreword

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THE CONFRATERNITY OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD is privileged to present another in its series of basic books for the Catholic family. The Confraternity has endeavored, during a score of years, to popularize the Liturgy, Sacred Scripture and Theology by placing in the hands of millions throughout the world such books as My Sunday Missal, My Daily Psalm Book, Christ in the Gospel, The New Testament, and My Way of Life.

The work here presented "My Daily Bread" is a summary of spiritual doctrine so simplified and arranged that everyone can come to a knowledge and practice of the principles of the spiritual life. It is divided into three books which treat respectively of the three ways of the Spiritual Life. (1) Purification—we must reform that which has been deformed in us by sin. (2) Imitation—we must conform to Christ that which has been reformed. (3) Union—we must transform through Christ that which has been conformed.

This book must be read, not only with the head, but with the heart. We must think and pray. This daily exercise will transform belief into realization, theory into practice. This work has been authored by the Rev. Anthony J. Paone, S.J. May it prove a helpful guide to daily spiritual growth. May it help souls to persevere in the holy resolutions which they make at the time of confession, Holy Communion, missions, retreats, or any moment of grace. While written primarily for the layman in the language of the layman, it will prove helpful to the priest and religious.

(Rt. Rev. Msgr.) Joseph B. Frey

Feast of Our Lady  
Dec. 8, 1953

## How to Use this Book

**EVERY MAN DREAMS**, at some time or other, of the better person he might have been or may yet become. This book deals with that dream—self-perfection. True, there are different ideals and standards of self-perfection, but only one ideal, one standard alone, will stand the test at the judgment seat of God. The one and only standard of goodness and perfection is the standard which God Himself has given us. We do not have to establish an ideal for ourselves. Our Heavenly Father has already given us one—His divine Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

If, like Mary, the sister of Lazarus, we had the privilege of sitting at the feet of Jesus and listening to His precious words of wisdom, peace, and joy, who of us would refuse to do so? Well, we can do so. Our Lord speaks to us far more often than we listen. He is much closer to us than we dream. Within one year, we would go far in self-perfection if we placed ourselves at His feet for a few minutes each day, and heard Him tell us how to improve our daily lives.

In this book we have some of the wonderful thoughts of Christ. Receive them, a chapter a day, as coming directly from Him. Often, between the lines, He will give you a message which is meant for you alone. This will be the grace of that chapter. God's grace will show you how to live a better life today, and it will also bring you the strength to do so. If you use these graces well, God will grant you greater ones. Daily you will grow more like Christ and less like your old self.

Each chapter follows this simple plan: (a) listen; (b) think; and (c) answer Him.

## BOOK ONE

### The Way of Purification

#### PART ONE: Conversion

- A. A Thoughtful Glance at Human Life
- B. The Four Last Things

#### PART TWO: After Conversion

Facing the Old Routine with a New Spirit

#### PART THREE: Temptation

- A. Nature, Value and Control of Temptations
- B. Certain Temptations in Particular

#### PART FOUR: Conquering Bad Habits

#### PART FIVE: Self-Conquest Through Mortification

## BOOK ONE

*The Way of Purification*

THOUGH A MAN may disregard God's holy commandments during his earthly life, he will have to account for them sooner or later. The greatest catastrophe which can befall a man is an unprovided death. At present he can help himself by admitting God's truth and obeying His law. After death, however, he will no longer be able to save himself. Though he had a lifetime to take advantage of God's love and mercy, he now faces God's justice. The Divine Justice will reward him according to his earthly life, and he will go to Heaven or hell.

A spiritual man is one who seeks to make the best use of this brief earthly life. He seeks to live in such a way that he may never sacrifice his greatest success for smaller and less important successes. He strives to place first things first. Therefore, he endeavors to follow God's holy Will in all things.

The first stage of a successful spiritual life consists of self-purification. Though self-purification is a life-long task, one in this stage of spiritual development makes it his outstanding daily goal. He strives to rid himself of all serious sins and any predominant venial faults which may lead to mortal sin. In so doing he lays a foundation for virtues which he will later practice in a more positive manner, and not just as the opposites of his present faults.

## PART ONE

*Conversion**A. A Thoughtful Glance at Human Life*

CONVERSION means "turning to God", whether it be for the first time or whether it be after a period of sluggish and half-hearted service. In this first part, one must honestly strive to see himself as he really is—weak and selfish, but loved by God, and made for the eternal glory and happiness of Heaven. Man must be deeply impressed with the true purpose of this earthly life, and do everything possible to make that purpose the main goal of his future actions.

## CHAPTER 1

*Man's Purpose on Earth*

CHRIST:

**M**Y CHILD, the highest goal of your life is union with Me in Heaven. Let your intentions throughout the day be guided by this truth. In all things be sure to stay on the path which leads to Heaven. Do not become too deeply interested in the passing desires and brief enjoyments of this earthly life.

2. I have given you everything that you are and everything you have. All things come to you from Me, the Supreme Good. Whatever comes, accept it, use it, enjoy it, as I wish and as much as I wish.

3. If you think only of satisfying yourself, without considering My approval, your mind becomes confused and your will becomes weak. Mistakes and sins will rob you of peace on earth and of unending happiness in Heaven. In all things, therefore, keep your eyes on Me.

4. Happy are those who desire only what I want, trying steadily to do My Will. Such people do not let themselves become completely absorbed by their daily activities. They frequently offer their activities to Me. They see the brevity of human contentment on earth.

5. Examine your motives in your daily words and actions. Find out how you may please Me more, and avoid everything which may draw you away from Me.

THINK:

I was created for eternal happiness with God in Heaven. Everything else must take second place in my life, because if I lose Heaven, I will be losing everything. The sure guide to Heaven is God's holy Will. If I follow it in my daily life, every moment on earth will be a sure step toward the perfect happiness which my heart craves.

PRAY:

My God and loving Father, grant me the wisdom to think, speak, and act each day as You want me to. May I never be such a fool as to disagree with Your supreme goodness and wisdom. Nothing on earth can bring me any lasting happiness. Therefore, let me never sin for the sake of anything. I want to live for the perfect happiness for which You created me. *Amen.*

## CHAPTER 2

*The Purpose of Created Things*

CHRIST:

**M**Y CHILD, if you directed your desires according to My Will, you would learn many a holy lesson from the events of daily life. Nothing is so small and unimportant that it does not, in some way, reflect my wisdom and goodness. When you have become as good and unselfish as you should be, you will find it easy to understand the deeper meaning of the events in your daily life. An unselfish heart sees much

more than what appears on the surface.

2. I created Heaven and earth for the service of man. I have even appointed angels to help man. In fact, I Myself am continually serving and helping man. If he lives as I desire, he shall one day share with Me the perfect happiness of Heaven.

3. What are you doing in return for My numberless favors? You should serve Me every single day of your life. Yet, you fail to give Me unselfish service even for one single day. I deserve all possible obedience, all possible honor and eternal praise. To Me you owe each breath and second of life. Without My continued support, nothing could please nor help you. All assistance and relief is the work of My hand.

THINK:

If I ever wrote down a list of God's gifts to me, I would have to compose a book. Everything and everybody, whatever I may mention, is a gift of God for a definite purpose. All things, not just some things, are in my life for God's good reasons. In one way or another, they are meant to help me earn the unending happiness and glory of Heaven. I must reject any person or thing that leads me away from this goal by sin. All things are to be used wisely, that is, to help me live a good and useful life. By an intelligent use and control of life's daily needs and activities, I prove my sincere desire for God's eternal love and friendship in Heaven.

PRAY:

My God, the good things that attract me on earth are only tiny reflections of Your perfect attraction and goodness. Let them never turn my thoughts aside from You, the Perfect Good. I hope to turn away from anybody or anything which draws me away from You. The good things of earth will pass away all too soon, but You will remain forever. I choose You now by a sincere daily battle against sin. Grant me the glorious favor of pleasing You on earth and loving You in Heaven. *Amen.*

### CHAPTER 3

#### *A Right Intention in All Things*

CHRIST:

**M**Y CHILD, in all things I want you to have a right intention. That means that I want you to have a supernatural purpose in whatever you think, do, or say. Whether you seek to avoid hell, diminish your purgatory, or gain Heaven, such motives are supernatural, and therefore they are right intentions. True, you are often unaware of your motives, but as long as you are not in mortal sin, and your action agrees with My law, you have a right intention.

2. A right intention, however, may have different degrees of perfection. Thus, when you do something simply to please Me, your intention is higher than if you think of your own advantage. Still, whatever be the degree of your right intention, it always seeks to fulfill My Will,

and it always brings you a greater good than any intention which seeks only your earthly welfare.

3. Regardless of feelings, moods, prejudices, or preferences, strive to maintain a right intention at all times. As soon as your natural desires contradict My Will, check them as you would check any other foolish intention.

4. Do not let life's daily events disturb nor affect you too much. Seek to know My Will and to accept it in all things. With this pure intention, you will have a deep interior peace. This is My gift to those who let Me govern their lives.

5. A person's intention tends to become dim as he proceeds through his daily occupations. Gradually he is influenced more by pleasure or self-satisfaction. Therefore, renew your pure intention at different times during the day. Offer Me each activity and avoid anything which might lead you into sin.

6. Recall your heavenly goal from time to time. Let there be nothing great, nothing high, nothing pleasant, nothing acceptable to you unless it helps you to follow My Will. Consider all useless consolations and sinful pleasures as so much worthless money.

7. One who truly loves Me, hates everything which holds him back from Me. I alone, the eternal, infinite God, the Perfect Joy of the soul, can bring true peace and unending happiness to your heart.

THINK:

Where are the pleasures and joys of last year? Gone and forgotten. If they made me worse, I shall find death and judgment a little harder to face. Why do I fail to value things according to God's way of thinking? He wants me to live a sinless and useful life. Even my pleasures should improve me in some way, and make me better able to do my work. Heaven is far greater than I can ever deserve. Still I should try each day to be a little less unworthy of it.

PRAY:

Lord, what You say is true. Grant that I may follow Your words in my daily life. Your truth shall teach me, guide me, and protect me. May it deliver me from all evil desires and foolish love. Let me esteem nothing as great, or valuable, or wonderful, except insofar as it makes me better and more pleasing in Your eyes. In this way I shall never be a slave of this earth, but shall walk daily towards Heaven with a holy freedom of heart. *Amen.*

#### CHAPTER 4

##### *Holy Indifference*

CHRIST:

**M**Y CHILD, let Me do with you as I please. I know what is best for you. You think as a human being, so that your judgments are often influenced by your feelings, moods or prejudices.

2. I take better care of you than you could