### DON BOSCO - COMPANION OF YOUTH

#### Part Two

#####  Particular exercises of Christian piety

###### Morning and evening prayers

A good boy, as soon as he awakens, should make the sign of the cross, and offer his heart to God saying: “Jesus, Mary and Joseph I give you my heart and my soul.” Then he should rise and dress himself with the greatest modesty. St Aloysius Gonzaga did not even want to look at his bare feet, because he looked on the virtue of purity as a spotless mirror that is tarnished by the least breath.

While dressing you could say: “Angel of the Lord, by his merciful providence you are my guardian. Watch over me through this day, enlighten my intellect, rule my affections, govern my feelings, so that I will not offend the Lord my God. Amen. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be, world with out end. Amen.” By saying this prayer you will earn many indulgences.

When you have dressed, kneel down before an image of Jesus crucified or of the Blessed Virgin, and then say the following prayers:
“In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

“My Lord and my God, I give you my whole heart.

I adore you and I love you with all my heart. I thank you for having created me, made me a Christian and preserved me through the night. I offer you all my actions and I beg you to give me the grace never to offend you, especially today.”

“Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. Amen.”

“Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you, blessed are you amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.”

“I believe in God the Father, Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord: Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary: Suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead and buried: He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead: He ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty: From thence he shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church: the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and life everlasting. Amen.”

“Hail, holy Queen, Mother of mercy, hail, our life, our sweetness and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve: to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this vale of tears. Turn then, most gracious Advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us, and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O merciful, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.”

The ten commandments of God are: 1. I am the Lord your God; you shall not have strange gods before Me. 2. You shall not take the Name of the Lord your God in vain. 3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's day. 4. Honour your father and your mother. 5. You shall not kill. 6. You shall not commit adultery. 7. You shall not steal. 8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour. 9. You shall not covet your neighbour's wife. 10. You shall not covet your neighbour's goods.

There are five commandments of the holy Church: 1. You shall attend Mass on Sundays and on holy days of obligation. 2. You shall observe the days of fasting and abstinence established by the Church. 3. You shall confess your sins at least once a year and go to communion at Easter. 4. You shall not celebrate weddings on days that are forbidden. 5. You shall help to provide for the needs of the Church.

Act of Faith: “I firmly believe that there is one God who rewards the good and punishes the bad. I believe that there are three really distinct persons in God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. I believe that the Son of God became man in the pure womb of the Virgin Mary by the work of the Holy Spirit: as man he died on the cross for our sins, and on the third day he rose again. I believe these and all the other truths of our holy Faith, because the one true God revealed them to the holy Church and through the Church teaches them to us.”

Act of Hope: “My God you are all powerful, merciful and faithful, I hope that you will give me pardon for my sins, the grace to live and die well, and heaven, that you promised me through the merits of Jesus Christ, if I do the work of a good Christian, as I resolve to do with your help.”

Act of charity: “My God, I love you above all things, I love you for the good things I have received from you, and I love you for what I hope to receive from you; but I love you mainly because you are an infinitely good God and therefore are worthy to be loved above all things. I love my neighbour as myself for love of you.”

Act of contrition: “O my God I am sorry and beg pardon for all my sins and detest them above all things, because they deserve your dreadful punishments, because they have crucified my loving Saviour, Jesus Christ, and most of all because they offend Your infinite goodness. And I firmly resolve by the help of your grace, never to offend you again and carefully to avoid the occasions of sin. Jesus, have mercy on me.” (The reigning Pius IX grants an indulgence of 100 days every time you say: Jesus, have mercy on me).

Throughout the day: “Virgin Mary, Mother of Jesus, St Aloysius Gonzaga, help me to be a saint.” When you have finished your prayers go to your parents to see what they tell you to do and do not do anything without their permission.

Of an evening say the rosary (if you have not already said it during the day) with your brothers and sisters, but do so devoutly, not in too much of a hurry, or in an unbecoming posture. When you do not have enough time to say the rosary, say at least three Hail Marys etc. to obtain her protection. Then say the same prayers as in the morning, adding this prayer to St Aloysius Gonzaga: “O glorious St Aloysius, I humbly beg you to take me under your protection and obtain for me from the Lord the help to practise your virtues in life so I can die a holy death and one day be partaker of your glory in heaven. Amen.” Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory be.

Pause for a few moments to consider the state of your conscience and if you find that your conscience reproaches you on account of some sin, heartily beg Our Lord's forgiveness and promise him to go to confession as soon as possible. While you are undressing imagine that you see the soldiers stripping Jesus of his clothing to whip him. As soon as you are in bed say: “Jesus, Mary and Joseph, I give you my heart and my soul. Jesus, Mary and Joseph, assist me in my last agony. Jesus, Mary and Joseph, may I breathe my soul in peace with you.” Then thinking of the presence of God go to sleep with your hands joined upon your breast.

During the day, or after morning and evening prayers read something from a life of a saint, like Saint Aloysius, or one of the meditations on page 31 [Seven meditations for each day of the week], or think of the advice your confessor gave you at your last confession.

During the day a good child should diligently attend to the things regarding his proper state and direct every action to the Lord, saying: “Lord I offer you this work. Give it your holy blessing.”

In the morning, at midday and in the evening when you hear the Angelus bell kneel (except for Saturday, Sunday and at Easter, when you stand) and say the following prayer:

Angelus Domini nuntiavit Mariae, et concepit de Spiritu Sancto. Ave Maria etc.

Ecce ancilla Domini, fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum. Ave Maria etc.

Et verbum caro factum est, et habitavit, in nobis. Ave Maria etc. Three Glory be to the Fathers.

Ora pro nobis, sancta Dei Genitrix.

Ut digni efficiamur promissionibus Christi.

Oremus: Gratiam tuam, quaesumus, Domine, mentibus nostris infunde, ut qui, angelo nuntiante, Christi filii tui incarnationem cognovimus, per passionem eius et crucem ad resurrectionis gloriam perducamur. Per eumdem Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

Benedict XIV granted 100 days indulgence every time you do this devotion. There are also some indulgences for someone who accompanies the holy Viaticum, when it is taken to the sick, or of you cannot go, say an Our Father and Hail Mary. At the moment of death there are many other indulgences that can be gained when someone goes to church and prays for the dying person and says at least an Our Father and Hail Mary. The same goes at the moment of death for whoever says three Requiem aeternams in suffrage for that soul.

Before meals make the sign of the cross and say: “Bless us O Lord and these your gifts, which of thy bounty we are about to receive, through Christ Our Lord. Amen.” Before sitting down to his meal one day St Benedict saw his wine glass in which poison had been put by an enemy break into pieces, just as he was blessing himself according to his usual custom.

After meals: “We give you thanks, Almighty God, for all your benefits, who live and reign forever and ever. Amen.”

###### Practical way of assisting with profit at holy Mass

Notice: Mass is the offering and sacrifice of the body and blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, which is offered and distributed under the species of consecrated bread and wine. Understand well, my dear children, that when you assist at Holy Mass it is as if you saw the Divine Saviour leaving Jerusalem and carrying the Cross up to Calvary, where he was crucified after the most barbarous torments, and shedding his blood to the last drop. The priest renews this same sacrifice when he celebrates Holy Mass with the difference however that the sacrifice on Calvary was painful to Jesus and accompanied by the shedding of blood, while that of the Mass is unbloody, that is without the shedding of blood. As one cannot imagine anything more holy, more precious than the body, blood, soul and divinity of Jesus Christ, so, while you are assisting at Mass you ought to be convinced that you are performing a great and holy act, which redounds to the glory of God and the good of your soul. At Mass Jesus Christ comes in person to apply to each one of us in particular the merits of that most adorable blood, shed for us on the Cross at Calvary. This ought to inspire us with the greatest reverence for Holy Mass together with a lively desire of assisting at it worthily. It is however no uncommon thing to see young people wilfully distracted at Holy Mass, behaving without decorum, attention, respect, often fidgeting and looking about. They renew the crucifixion of Jesus, giving scandal to their companions and causing harm to our holy religion!

To avoid such a great evil, enter with the dispositions of a true Christian in the spirit of Jesus Christ and imagine you see him beginning his awful passion, exposed to the most barbarous treatment for our salvation. During Mass behave with modesty and recollection so that you may avoid distraction. Let your mind, heart and sentiments be intent on honouring God. I recommend to you the practice of assisting at Holy Mass every day even at the cost of making some sacrifice. Saint Isidore, who was a farm labourer, used to rise very early in order to go to Mass so that he might get back in time to do his master's work. In this way he drew upon himself many blessings and all his work succeeded very well.

At the beginning of Mass: “My Lord Jesus Christ, I offer you this holy sacrifice for your greater glory and for the spiritual good of my soul. Grant me the grace that my heart and my soul may have no other thought than of you. My soul, drive away every idle thought and prepare me to assist at this Holy Mass with the greatest recollection.”

At the Confiteor: “I confess to almighty God, to Blessed Mary ever Virgin, to Blessed Michael the Archangel, to Blessed John the Baptist, to the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul and to all the saints, that I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word and deed. Through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault. Therefore I beseech the Blessed Mary ever Virgin, Blessed Michael the Archangel, Blessed John the Baptist, the holy Apostles Peter and Paul and all the saints to pray to the Lord our God for me.”

As the priest goes up to the altar: “May all the earth adore you O Lord and sing praise to your holy name. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

At the Kyrie eleison: “My Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on this poor soul of mine.”

At the Gloria: “Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to men of good will, because God alone is worthy to be praised and glorified forever.”

At the Oremus: “Receive, O Lord, the prayers addressed to you for us by the priest. Grant me the grace to live and die as a good Christian in the bosom of holy Mother Church.”

At the Epistle: “Inflame O Lord my heart with your holy love, so that I may love and serve you all the days of my life.”

At the Gospel: “I am ready, O Lord, to confess the faith of the Gospel at the cost of my life, and to confess the great truths contained therein. Give me the grace to do your will and to flee from sin and all occasions of sin.”

At the Credo: “My God I firmly believe all that you have revealed to your Church because you are infallible truth. Increase in me the spirit of lively faith, firm hope and ardent charity.

At the Offertory: “I offer to you, my God, through the hands of the priest, the bread and wine which are to be changed into the body and blood of Jesus Christ. I offer to you at the same time my heart and my tongue, so that for the future I may desire nothing and say nothing, but what regards you holy service.”

At the Orate fratres: “Receive, O Lord, this sacrifice to the honour and glory of you holy name, to my advantage and for that of the holy Church.”

At the Preface: “Raise my heart up to God O my soul and consider what Jesus Christ has suffered on account of your sins.”

At the Sanctus: “O my soul join in spirit with the chorus of the angels and sing a single hymn of glory saying: ‘Holy, holy holy Lord, God of hosts.’ May you be glorified and blessed forever.”

At the Commemoration of the living: “I beseech you, Jesus, to bless my parents, friends, benefactors and even my enemies; remember especially the sovereign Pontiff, the whole church and all authority spiritual or temporal. May there be peace, harmony and blessing.”

At the elevation of the Host: “My Lord Jesus, prostrate with all humility, I adore you and firmly believe that you are present in this sacred host. O wondrous mystery that God should come down from heaven for my salvation! Blessed and praised every moment be the most Holy and Divine Sacrament.” (100 days indulgence every time).

At the elevation of the Chalice: “My Lord, Jesus Christ, I adore the blood you shed for the salvation of my soul. I offer it to you in memory of his passion, death resurrection and ascension into heaven. receive it in expiation for my sins and for the needs of holy Church.”

At the commemoration of the dead: “Remember, O Lord, the souls in purgatory especially those of my relatives and benefactors, spiritual and temporal. Free them as soon as possible from those torments and grant to all the glory of paradise.”

At the Our Father: “I thank you, my Jesus, for this wonderful prayer you have given me. Grant me the grace to say it with the attention and devotion it deserves. Grant also those graces which the celebrant asks of you in it for me, and above all that I may not fall into mortal sin which is the greatest and only evil that can ruin me for all eternity.” Say the Our Father, etc.

At the Agnus Dei: “Jesus, Immaculate Lamb, I beseech you to have mercy on me and on all the people in the world so that they may return to you and enjoy the true peace that is given to those who live in your grace.”

At the Domine non sum dignus: “O Lord, because of the number of my sins I am not worthy that you should come to dwell in my soul; say but the word and all my sins will be forgiven. I am very sorry for having offended you. Grant me the grace to never displease you again.”

At the communion: If you are not going to receive Holy Communion sacramentally, at least make a spiritual communion, which consists in an ardent desire of receiving Jesus into your heart, and say: “My dear Jesus, since I cannot receive your holy Sacrament this morning, come and take possession of my by your grace, that I may always live in your holy love. The grace that I particularly ask is to be able to avoid bad companions, because if I have the fortune to associate only with good companions, I too will be good and will save my soul.”

At the Postcommunion: “I thank you, my God for having offered yourself as a sacrifice for me. Grant that I may from this moment give myself wholly to you. Sorrows, fatigue, heat, cold, hunger, thirst and even death I will willingly accept from your hands. I am ready to sacrifice everything and to lose everything if only I can fulfil your holy Law.”

At the Blessing: “Bless O Lord my good resolutions. Bless me by the hand of your minister and grant that the effects of this blessing may always remain with me. In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

At the last Gospel: “Eternal Word, made flesh to save my soul, I adore you with deep respect and I thank you for having suffered for me. Grant me the grace to preserve the fruits of this Holy Mass; forgive me if I have not assisted with due attention and grant that when I leave this church my eyes, tongue and all my senses will recoil in horror at anything opposed to the truth of your holy Gospel.”

Say a Hail Holy Queen to the Blessed Virgin and an Our Father to St Aloysius so they may help you keep the resolutions you have made and especially avoid improper conversations.

###### Practical way of approaching the sacrament of confession worthily

Dear boys, if you do not learn how to confess well when you are young, you run the risk of never learning how to do so again during your lifetime, and as a result, of never going to Confession as you should, which will will be harmful to you and could even put your eternal salvation at risk. But firstly I would like you to be convinced that anything you may have on your conscience will be forgiven in Confession, so long as you approach it with the correct dispositions.

The first of these is the examination of conscience, meaning that you go back over what you have done to find out what was good and what was sinful. Begin by asking the Lord to enlighten you saying: “My Lord Jesus Christ, my Redeemer, I put myself at your feet and beg you to have pity and mercy on me. Enlighten me with your grace so that I may recognise my sins as I would if I were to present myself to you at the time of judgement. My God, may I detest them with true sorrow and may I be forgiven through the infinite merits of the most precious blood of Jesus Christ, shed for me on the cross. Most Holy Virgin, St Aloysius Gonzaga, pray for me that I may make a good Confession.”

Examine yourself to see whether you have spoken badly of religious matters; or if you have blasphemed, taken the Lord's name in vain. Did you attend Mass on Sundays or holy days? Have you performed works of mercy on those days or did you work instead, as is forbidden? Examine whether you have been disobedient at home, or to your superiors or teachers, or if you have answered them back. Have you acted badly in church or outside, especially through bad talk or by giving bad advice? Have you stolen anything at home or outside? Note that 'stealing' also includes the misuse of time that should be spent on things you have been asked to do. Have you thought of, listened to, done or allowed others to do or even just considered things that are dishonest? I must tell you that this examination is not only about discovering what sins, but you should also say the number of times you committed this or that other sin. For example: it is not enough to say: I disobeyed my parents, but you should add, I disobeyed them two or three times, that is give a precise or an approximate number of times your were disobedient. Do the same with other sins.

These are the main things you should examine your conscience about. But again, it is not enough just to make a good Confession. You must also be truly sorry and seriously consider that sin is a real evil. Sin opens up hell beneath your feet. What an evil; how terrible this is! It locks you out of heaven: what a terrible loss this is! It makes you God's enemy and slaves of the devil. Every one of your sins is the cause of acute pain to the loving heart of Jesus, who was whipped for you, crowned with thorns, and shed his blood on the cross; and you treated him this way, looked down on him, did these things. Sin is an offence against the God who is so good to you and so loving by nature. He created you and sustains you in life. Holiness, the air you breathe, the bread you eat are all gifts that God gives you. He has preserved you from constant misfortune and from hell itself which you have so often deserved. And your response to his goodness has so often been monstrous ingratitude by committing these sins and offending him.

In view of the great evil you do by sinning, you should be very sorry for whenever you have offended God because it is worse than any other terrible thing that might have happened to you, or than any punishment you might have received from your parents or others. Your sorrow should lead you to a good resolution, a promise never to offend God again in future. For example: you have said bad words, or were disobedient, so if your confession is to be real you should promise the Lord that you will never commit these sins again even at the cost of suffering.

After these reflections, make an act of contrition and then humbly approach your confessor, and if you need to wait, don't waste time talking or smiling or looking around, but recollect yourself and wait until it is your turn. I must warn you never to remain silent about some sins in confession. Before you sinned, the devil was telling you that doing such and such was not a bad thing; afterwards he does what he can to make you feel ashamed so you will keep quiet about it and make a sacrilegious confession. So never be afraid of what your confessor may think. He will be happy knowing that you confide in him about what you have done. You can also be certain that the priest can never tell anyone what you have confessed, nor can he make use of anything you have said even if it means his avoiding death. So courage then, and first confess the sin that weighs upon you most.

Once you have entered the confessional make the sign of the cross and say: “Bless me Father, for I have sinned." Then tell him how long it is since you last confessed and tell him the state of your conscience, giving him the number and kind of your sins. When you have finished, listen to what he tells you, and while he is giving you absolution, consider that this is precisely the moment when the blood of Jesus Christ is being shed for you. Then make a sincere act of contrition. When you have finished your confession, remain by yourself and thank the Lord for the good things he has done for you.

After Confession. Heartily renew the act of sorrow you made in Confession, promising the Lord that you want to do everything suggested by the confessor to avoid falling into sin again and make these three resolutions: 1. To behave very well in church; 2. To be readily obedient to your parents and your other superiors; 3. To be ready to do all of your duties according to your state in life and that you want to work for the glory of God and the salvation of your soul. Devoutly say this

Prayer “Oh my God, how grateful I should be for the mercy you have shown me in forgiving all my sins! You love me and may you love me even more if I am faithful in serving you. Oh! I really do want to make amends. I promise to avoid all occasions of sin. I will never forget that you are everywhere, and that you see and know everything I do and think. Help me and may I die rather than offend you again. Mary, my dearest mother, never let me offend my good Jesus again through sin. My guardian angel, all the saints, help me and watch over me always.”

Three Angel of God and three Glory be's.

###### Preparing for Holy Communion

Before presenting yourself to receive the adorable body of Jesus Christ you should consider whether you have the correct disposition of heart. Know then that the child who does not want to make amends after sinning, meaning that he want to offend the Lord again, is not worthy of being enriched by grace; instead he becomes even more guilty and worthy of greater punishment.

On the other hand if you do correct your ways, go and receive the food of the angels and you will give Jesus Christ much pleasure. When he was on this earth he invited people to follow him, but showed special kindness to good and innocent children, saying: “Let the little children come to me; do not stop them”, and he blessed them. So heed his loving invitation and go not only to receive his blessing, but to him in person.

###### Prayers before Communion

“My Lord Jesus Christ, I keenly believe that you are really present in the Blessed Sacrament in your body and blood, soul and divinity. Lord, I adore you in this Sacrament and I acknowledge that you are my creator, redeemer, sovereign, master, my highest and only good.”

“Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed. Lord I detest all my sins. They make me unworthy of receiving you into my heart but with your grace I resolve not to commit them in future, to avoid the occasions of sin and to do penance for them.”
“Lord I hope that by giving yourself totally to me in this divine Sacrament you will show mercy on me and grant me all the graces I need for my eternal salvation. Lord, you are infinitely lovable, you are my Father, my Redeemer and my God, therefore I love you with all my heart above all things and because of your love I love my neighbour as myself and heartily forgive anyone who has offended me.”

“Lord, I earnestly want you to come into my heart, so that I may never be separated from you and that you may always remain with me through your divine grace.”
“Immaculate Virgin, through the love you showed to your child Jesus, make me always worthy of receiving him; and when I approach the altar to receive the sacred host, I will consider that I am receiving him from your very hands accompanied by the choirs of angels who praise and bless him in Heaven. My Guardian Angel, St Aloysius Gonzaga, my special protectors, pray to the Lord for me and obtain for me the grace of making a holy Communion. Omnes sancti et sanctae Dei, intercedite pro nobis.”

Then pause for a while to consider who you are to receive him. This is Jesus Christ, God so great and of infinite majesty, God of kindness and mercy who comes to you, poor miserable creature, poor sinner that you are; and he comes to be your father, brother, friend and spouse of your soul. He wants to heal you, to be your teacher and your food. Oh how good he is! Oh such love! Oh such infinite mercy!

###### After Communion

“My God, creator and redeemer of my soul, I adore you with profound respect and deepest reverence. Oh how great is your kindness! Such pure majesty, so holy and infinite but you come in person to visit such a miserable creature, a handful of dust, an ungrateful sinner. My dear and good Jesus, I thank you for such a great favour, I praise you and bless you within me. All the power of my being, all the sentiments of my body, exult in the presence of your God. One heart, o my good Jesus, is too little to love you, praise you and thank you for so many benefits and especially for having given me as food for my soul you body, blood, soul and divinity.”

“If only I had the heart of the Seraphim in Heaven, so that my heart could burn forever with the love of my God who has deigned to choose my poor soul for his dwelling, for his delight! Ah, dear Jesus, how sweet and precious is this visit of yours, this time spent with me, this union with you!”

“I am not worthy of such great favour, nor do I know what to offer as thanksgiving but relying on your infinite merits I offer you these very same merits. I thank you with all my heart and I claim that in the future you will always be my hope, my comfort, my only wealth, my pleasure, rest for my soul. You are my only good, my possession, and my heart's treasure. I would like to be able to give you all the praise and glory the Saints give you in Heaven; but since I cannot do everything I offer you my entire self; I offer you my will so that it may want nothing other than what pleases you; I offer you my hands, my feet, my eyes, my tongue, my mouth, my mind, my heart: I offer them all to you. watch over all my feelings so that every thought and action may have no other aim than to do what is to your greatest glory and to the spiritual advantage of my soul.”

“Most holy Virgin, dear mother of my Jesus, Saint Aloysius Gonzaga, my Guardian Angel, obtain this grace for me, my family, my companions, friends and enemies, and especially for the people who are here in church today.”

“O Virgin Mary, believing that I am yours I consecrate all of my life to you, my eyes, ears, tongue, heart and all my being. I want to be all yours; defend me as your own. Jesus, Mary and Joseph, I give you my soul with all my heart. Jesus, Mary and Joseph assist me in my last agony. Jesus, Mary and Joseph, may I breathe my soul in peace with you.”

###### Visit to the Blessed Sacrament

Always remember, my dear young friends, that Jesus is always present in the Most Holy Sacrament and that he has an abundance of graces ready to bestow on anyone who asks him for them. One day when St John Berchmans was visiting the Blessed Sacrament, he saw Our Lord in the form of a little child holding in his hands a crown of roses. The saint asked what the roses meant and received this reply from Jesus: “These roses are the graces which I give to those who come to ask for them.”

###### Prayers during a visit to the Blessed Sacrament

“My Lord Jesus Christ, who for the love you bear for us remain day and night in this Sacrament, full of mercy and love, inviting, awaiting and receiving all those who come to visit you,I believe that you are present in the Sacred Host which is your body, blood, soul and divinity. I adore you humbly and thank you for all the good things you have given me, especially for having given me yourself in this Sacrament, for having given me your holy Mother Mary as my advocate and for having called me to visit you in this church. I salute your most loving heart and I desire to do so for three reasons: 1. In thanksgiving for this great gift; 2. To atone for the injuries you have received in this Sacrament from people without faith, heretics and all bad Christians; 3. To adore you in all places where you are least honoured and most neglected in this Holy Sacrament.”

“O my Jesus, I love you with all my heart. I am sorry for having hitherto displeased your infinite goodness. I resolve with the help of your grace never to offend you again. From now on I wish to be all yours; do with me whatever you wish, I only ask for your love, perseverance in doing good and perfect fulfilment of your will.”

“I recommend to you the souls in purgatory, especially those who were most devoted to the Blessed Sacrament and to Mary Most Holy; I recommend to you also all poor sinners. I unite all my affections with those of your most loving Heart and thus united I offer them to the eternal Father and I beseech him in your name to accept and hear them. May the most holy and Blessed Sacrament be praised at every moment.” Three Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory etc.

###### Chaplet of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

Say this chaplet to the Divine Heart of Jesus to make up for the outrages he receives in the Holy Eucharist from heretics, unfaithful people and unworthy Christians. Either alone or with others if you can say this prayer before an image of the Sacred Heart or before the Blessed Sacrament.

V/ Deus, in adiutorium meum intende.

R/ Domine, ad adiuvandum me festina. Gloria Patri etc.

1. “O most amiable heart of my Jesus, I humbly adore you in the Blessed Sacrament where you show such wondrous mercy and sweetness to all poor sinners. I grieve to see you so ungratefully requited and I will endeavour to console you for the many insults you receive in the most Holy Eucharist from heretics, unfaithful people and unworthy Christians.” Our Father etc.

2. “O most humble Heart of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, I adore your profound humility in this Blessed Sacrament, hiding your divinity for us under the species of bread and wine. Grant I beseech you, my Jesus that such a beautiful virtue be in my heart too; meanwhile I will try to make up for all the offences you receive in the most Holy Eucharist from heretics, unfaithful people and unworthy Christians.” Our Father etc.

3. “O Heart of my Jesus who has suffered so much, I adore you in your passion so ardently embraced for love of us and in the Blessed Sacrament where you receive, as you foresaw, so many injuries in return for your love. My Jesus I resolve to make reparation with my own life; I would like to prevent those offences that unfortunately you receive in the Eucharist from heretics, unfaithful people and unworthy Christians.” Our Father etc.
4. “O most patient Heart of my Jesus, I humbly venerate your invincible patience in bearing for love of me such great pain on the Cross and so many insults in the Eucharist. O my dear Jesus! Since I am not able to wash with my blood those places where you were so cruelly treated in both of these Divine Mysteries, I promise you, good and kind Jesus, to use every means in my power to make up for the many outrages your Divine Heart has received, and that you receive in the Eucharist from heretics, unfaithful people and unworthy Christians.” Our Father etc.

5. “O Heart of my Jesus, who so lovingly condescended to institute the most Holy Eucharist, I adore you and thank you for the immense love you bore us by giving us your divine body and blood as food. Our hearts should be consumed at the thought of such immense charity O my dear Jesus fill my heart with sorrow and compassion and grant that I may console you for the offences you receive in the Blessed Sacrament from heretics, unfaithful people and unworthy Christians.” Our Father etc.

6. “O Heart of Jesus thirsting for our salvation, I humbly venerate the love which has prompted you to sacrifice yourself so completely for us on the Cross, renewed every day on the altars in Holy Mass. Why are not our hearts burning with gratitude at the sight of so much love? Unfortunately not, my God. I promise to do all in my power to make up for so many outrages you have received in this mystery of love from heretics, unfaithful people and unworthy Christians.” Our Father etc. (This exercise can serve as a novena for the Feasts of Our Lord Jesus Christ).

###### Prayer to the most sacred heart of Mary

“God save you, august Queen of Peace, Mother of God; by the Sacred Heart of your Son, Jesus, prince of peace, grant that his anger may soften and he may reign over us in peace. REMEMBER, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thy intercession was left unaided. Inspired with this confidence, I fly to thee, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother; to thee do I come; before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer me.” (Pius IX grants an indulgence of 300 every time you devoutly say this prayer).

“Sweet and good Jesus, I do not wish to offend you again.”

“Sacred Heart of Mary, grant that I may save my soul. Sacred Heart of Jesus, grant that I may love you more and more.”
…

###### Chaplet of the Seven Sorrows of Our Lady

Preparation. Dear brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ, let us make our usual exercises by meditating on the bitter sorrows that the Blessed Virgin Mary suffered in the life and death of her beloved Son, our Divine Saviour. Imagine that we are close to Jesus hanging from the Cross and that his afflicted Mother tells each of us: Come and see if there is any sorrow equal to mine. Convinced that this merciful Mother wishes to grant us special protection and meditating on her sorrows we invoke divine help with the following prayers:

Veni, Sancte Spiritus, reple tuorum corda fidelium et tui amoris in eis ignem accende.
V/. Emitte spiritum tuum et creabuntur,
R/. Et renovabis faciem terrae.
V/. Memento congregationis tuae,
R/. Quam possedisti ab initio.
V/. Domine, exaudi orationem meam,
R/. Et clamor meus ad te veniat.

Oremus: Mentes nostras; quaesumus, Domine, lumine tuae claritatis illustra, ut videre possimus, quae agenda sunt, et quae recta sunt agere valeamus. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. R. Amen.

First sorrow: The Prophecy of Simeon. The Blessed Virgin Mary suffered the first sorrow when she presented her only Son, Jesus, in the Temple. As she laid him in the arms of the holy man, Simeon,, he said to her: And your own soul a sword shall pierce; meaning the passion and death of Our Lord Jesus Christ. An Our Father and seven Hail Mary.

Second sorrow: Flight into Egypt. The Blessed Virgin suffered this sorrow when they had to fly to Egypt because of cruel Herod's persecution who impiously sought to kill her beloved Son. An Our Father etc.

Third sorrow: Jesus lost in the Temple. The Blessed Virgin suffered her third sorrow at the time of the Pasch after she went with her spouse Joseph and her beloved Son to Jerusalem. One her way back to her poor home she missed her Son and sought him sorrowing for three days. An Our Father etc.

Fourth sorrow: Meeting Jesus carrying the Cross. The Blessed Virgin suffered her fourth sorrow when she met her beloved Son carrying a heavy Cross upon his delicate shoulders on the way to Mount Calvary to be crucified for our salvation. An Our Father etc.

Fifth sorrow: Crucifixion of Jesus. The Blessed Virgin suffered her fifth sorrow when she beheld her Son Jesus lifted up on the hard Cross shedding blood from every member of his sacred body. An Our Father etc.

Sixth sorrow: The descent from the Cross. The Blessed Virgin suffered her sixth sorrow when her beloved Son, after being pierced with a lance and taken down from the Cross after death, was placed in her arms. An Our Father etc.

Seventh sorrow: The burial of Jesus. The Blessed Virgin Mary, Our Lady and advocate of poor sinners, suffered her seventh sorrow when she accompanied the sacred body of her son to the tomb. An Our Father etc.

Say 3 Hail Marys in profound veneration of the tears shed by the Blessed Virgin in all her sorrows to obtain true sorrow for our sins. Hail Mary etc.
At the end of this chaplet sing the hymn: Stabat Mater dolorosa …

V/. Ora pro nobis, Virgo dolorosissima!

R/. Ut digni efficiamur promissionibus Christi.

Oremus: Interveniat pro nobis, quaesumus, Domine Iesu Christe, nunc et in hora mortis nostrae apud tuam clementiam beata Virgo Maria Mater tua, cuius sacratissimam animam in hora tuae passionis doloris gladius pertransivit. Per te, Iesu Christe salvator mundi, qui cum Patre et Spiritu Sancto vivis et regnas in saecula saeculoram. R. Amen.

###### The seven joys of Mary in heaven

1. Rejoice O Immaculate Spouse of the Holy Spirit, with the joy that is yours in heaven, because through your purity and virginity you have been exalted above all the angels and raised above all the saints. Hail Mary etc. Glory etc.

2. Rejoice O Mother of God with the joy you experience in heaven, because as the sun illumines the whole earth here below so do you adorn and render all heaven resplendent with your radiant beauty. Hail Mary etc.

3. Rejoice O Daughter of God, on account of the happiness you enjoy in heaven. All the choirs of Angels, Archangels, Thrones, Dominions, and all the blessed spirits honour you, revere you and acknowledge you as the Mother of their Creator and are most obedient at the least sign from you. Hail Mary etc.

4. Rejoice O Handmaid of the Most Holy Trinity, on account of the joy you experience in heaven, whereby all the graces you ask of your divine Son are instantly granted you; even more so as St Bernard says, that no grace is granted here on earth without first passing through your most holy hands. Hail Mary etc.

5. Rejoice O most August Queen, because you alone did merit to sit at the right hand of your most holy Son, who sits at the right hand of the Eternal Father. Hail Mary etc.

6. Rejoice O refuge of sinners, comforter of the afflicted, for the heights to which you have been elevated in heaven, so that all those who praise and revere you in this world, the Eternal Father will reward with his holy grace and his immense glory. Hail Mary etc.

7. Rejoice O Mother, Spouse and Daughter of God, because all the graces, glories, joys and privileges that you now enjoy in heaven, far from diminishing will continue to increase until the day of judgement and endure through all eternity. Hail Mary etc.

Prayer to the Blessed Virgin: O glorious Virgin Mary, Mother of my Lord, source of all our consolation, I beseech you through these your joys which with all devotion I now recall to mind, obtain for me from God the remission of my sins and the continual aid of his holy grace. may I never become unworthy of your protection but may have the happiness of receiving the heavenly blessings which you obtain and bestow upon all who devoutly meditate upon the joys that fill your Immaculate Heart, O immortal Queen of heaven.

###### Devotion to our Guardian Angel

1. “My Guardian Angel, you did not disdain to take good care of me, a miserable sinner! I beseech you, animate my soul with a lively faith, firm hope and an ardent charity, so that despising the world I may think only of loving and serving God.” Three ‘Angel of God’s and three ‘Glory be’s.

2. “O most noble prince of the Heavenly Court, you take such good care of my poor soul. Defend it from the snares and assaults of the devil, that I may never more offend my God.” Three ‘Angel of God’s etc.

3. “O most glorious spirit who watches over my poor soul with such tender and constant care obtain for me the grace ever to be devoted to you, and faithfully to put into practice the counsels which you suggest to my mind and inspire in my heart.” Three ‘Angel of God’s etc.

4. “O most loving guardian of my soul who humbled yourself so much in descending from heaven to minister to a creature so vile, grant that I too may obtain a love of true humility fully persuaded that I can do nothing without your help and the grace of God.” Three ‘Angel of God’s etc.

5. “O most kind spirit who labours so much for the salvation of my soul, obtain for me from God that at the end of my life my soul may pass from your hands into the loving arms of Jesus.” Three ‘Angel of God’s etc.

Prayer: “O most loving Guardian, since all you do for me in this world has no other purpose than the salvation of my soul grant I beseech you, that when I am on my deathbed, deprived of my senses, and plunged into the abyss of agony, you will protect my soul as it is about to leave my body to appear before its Creator; defend it from its enemies and lead it victorious with you to enjoy forever the glory of paradise. Amen.”

###### Short form of the Way of the Cross

V/. Adoramus te, Christe, et benedicimus tibi.

R/. Quia per sanctam crucem et mortem tuam redemisti mundum.
Oremus: Respice, quaesumus, Domine, super hanc familiam tuam, pro qua Dominus noster Iesus Christus non dubitavit manibus tradi nocentium et crucis subire tormentum. Qui tecum vivit et regnat in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

Act of contrition: My Redeemer and my God, behold me at your feet, repenting of my sins with all my heart, because they are an offence to your infinite goodness. I would rather die than offend you again because I love you above all things. Miserere nostri, Domine, miserere nostri.

Holy Mother, grant that the Lord's wounds may be impressed on my heart.

Stabat Mater dolorosa / iuxta crucem lacrymosa / dum pendebat Filius.

Station I

V/. Adoramus te, Christe, et benedicimus tibi.

R/. Quia per sanctam crucem, et mortem tuam redemisti mundum.

The first station presents us with the Praetorium of Pilate where our Divine redeemer is condemned to death. Consider O my soul how Pilate condemned to the death of the Cross Jesus the most innocent, and how he willingly submitted to this sentence in order that we might be free from eternal damnation. Oh Jesus I thank you for so much love and I beseech you to cancel the sentence of eternal death which I deserve for my sins, so that I may be made worthy to enjoy eternal life. Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory be etc. Miserere nostri, Domine, miserere nostri.

Holy Mother, grant that the Lord's wounds may be impressed on my heart.

Cuius animam gementem, / contristatam et dolentem / pertransivit gladius.

Station II

V/. Adoramus te, Christe et benedicimus tibi.

R/. Quia per sanctam crucem et mortem tuam redemisti mundum.

The second station recalls to our minds how Jesus was loaded with the heavy weight of the Cross. Consider O my soul how Jesus took upon his shoulders the Cross which was made heavy by your numerous and grievous sins. Oh Jesus Pardon me and give me the grace not to wound you again for the rest of my life by sin, but rather to bear constantly the cross of true repentance. Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory be etc. Miserere nostri, Domine, miserere nostri.
Holy Mother, grant etc.

O quam tristis et afflicta / fuit illa benedicta / Mater Unigeniti!

Station III

V/. Adoramus te, Christe et benedicimus tibi.

R/. Quia per sanctam crucem et mortem tuam redemisti mundum.

The third station represents to us how Jesus fell the first time beneath the weight of the Cross. Consider O my soul, how Jesus, not being able to bear the heavy weight, fell beneath the Cross thus experiencing excessive pain. My Jesus my repeated falls into sin are the cause of your suffering. Grant I beseech you, the grace never to renew your pain by any more sins. Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory be etc. Miserere nostri, Domine, miserere nostri.

Holy Mother, grant etc.

Quae maerebat et dolebat, / pia mater dum videbat / nati paenas inclyti.

Station IV

V/. Adoramus te, Christe et benedicimus tibi.

R/. Quia per sanctam crucem et mortem tuam redemisti mundum.

This fourth station represents to us the sorrowful meeting between the Blessed Virgin and her Divine Son. Consider O my soul how deeply wounded was the heart of Our Blessed Lady at the sight of Jesus, and the Heart of Jesus on seeing his Sorrowing Mother. You were the cause of this sorrow for Jesus and Mary by your sins. Oh Jesus Oh Mary! Grant that I may feel true sorrow for my sins, so that I may repent of them all my life and may merit your pity at the hour of my death. Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory be etc. Miserere nostri, Domine, miserere nostri.

Holy Mother, grant etc.

Quis est homo, qui non fleret / matrem Christi si videret / in tanto supplicio?

Station V

V/. Adoramus te, Christe et benedicimus tibi.

R/. Quia per sanctam crucem et mortem tuam redemisti mundum.

This fifth station represents to us how Simon of Cyrene was compelled to carry the Cross after Jesus. Consider O my soul how Jesus had no longer the strength to carry the Cross, and the Jews out of a pretended compassion relieved him of its enormous weight. Oh Jesus It is I who should bear the Cross on account of my sins. Grant that I may at least accompany you by bearing for your love the cross of all adversities. Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory etc. Miserere nostri, Domine, miserere nostri.

Holy Mother, grant etc.

Quis non posset contristari / piam matrem contemplari / dolentem cum Filio?

Station VI

V/. Adoramus te, Christe et benedicimus tibi.

R/. Quia per sanctam crucem et mortem tuam redemisti mundum.

This sixth station represents to us Veronica as she wiped the face of Jesus. Consider, O my soul, the homage rendered to Jesus by this pious woman and how he at once rewarded it by imprinting his sacred countenance on the cloth. My Jesus grant me the grace to cleanse my soul from every stain and to imprint on my mind and heart your most sacred passion. Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory etc. Miserere nostri, Domine, miserere nostri.

Holy Mother, grant etc.

Pro peccatis suae gentis / vidit Iesum in tormentis / et flagellis subditum.

Station VII

V/. Adoramus te, Christe et benedicimus tibi.

R/. Quia per sanctam crucem et mortem tuam redemisti mundum.

This seventh station represents to us the second fall of Jesus, which increased his torture and ignominy. Consider O my soul, the sufferings of Jesus in this new fall, inflicted by my repeated falls into sin. Oh Jesus I am covered with confusion before you and I beg you to give me the grace so to rise from my falls that I may never again relapse into them. Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory etc. Miserere nostri, Domine, miserere nostri.

Holy Mother, grant etc.

Vidit suum dulcem natum / morientem desolatum / dum emisit spiritum.

Station VIII

V/. Adoramus te, Christe et benedicimus tibi.

R/. Quia per sanctam crucem et mortem tuam redemisti mundum.

This eighth station represents to us when Jesus met the women who were weeping over him. Consider O my soul, how Jesus told these women not to cry over him but over themselves, in order that we might learn to grieve for our sins before feeling sorry for his sufferings. Oh Jesus grant me the tears of true contrition so that my sympathy with your sorrows may be meritorious. Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory etc. Miserere nostri, Domine, miserere nostri.

Holy Mother, grant etc.

Eia, Mater fons amoris, / me sentire vim doloris / fac, ut tecum lugeam.

Station IX

V/. Adoramus te, Christe et benedicimus tibi.

R/. Quia per sanctam crucem et mortem tuam redemisti mundum.

This ninth station represents to us the third fall of Jesus, bringing him fresh wounds and further sufferings. Consider O my soul, how the good Jesus fell a third time because our obstinacy in sin has caused us to fall so repeatedly. Oh Jesus I am determined to renounce sin once and for all to bring you consolation. Grant that I may strengthen my resolution and make it effective through your grace. Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory etc. Miserere nostri, Domine, miserere nostri.

Holy Mother, grant etc.

Fac ut ardeat cor meum / in amando Christum Deum, / ut sibi complaceam.

Station X

V/. Adoramus te, Christe et benedicimus tibi.

R/. Quia per sanctam crucem et mortem tuam redemisti mundum.

This tenth station represents to us how Jesus, as soon as he reached Mount Calvary, was stripped of his clothing and given bitter gall to drink. Consider O my soul, the deep confusion of Jesus on being stripped of his clothes and his suffering at being forced to drink the bitter mixture of gall and myrrh . He suffered because of my immodesty and intemperance. Oh Jesus I am sorry for the many liberties I have taken in the past and resolve never more to afflict you in such a manner but to practise modesty and temperance This I am confident of doing with the help of your grace. Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory etc. Miserere nostri, Domine, miserere nostri.

Holy Mother, grant etc.

Sancta Mater, istud agas, / Crucifixi fige plagas / cordi meo valide.

Station XI

V/. Adoramus te, Christe et benedicimus tibi.

R/. Quia per sanctam crucem et mortem tuam redemisti mundum.

This eleventh station represents to us how Jesus was nailed to the Cross in the presence of his afflicted Mother. Consider O my soul, the racking pain that Jesus suffered as he felt the nails pierce his hands and his feet. Oh the cruelty of those Jews! Oh what love Jesus has for us! My Jesus you suffered so much for me yet I avoid every pain. Grant that I may nail my will to your holy Cross so that it may be resolved never again to offend you but rather to suffer every pain for your love. Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory etc. Miserere nostri, Domine, miserere nostri.

Holy Mother, grant etc.

Tui nati vulnerati / tam dignati pro me pati / paenas mecum divide.

Station XII

V/. Adoramus te, Christe et benedicimus tibi.

R/. Quia per sanctam crucem et mortem tuam redemisti mundum.

This twelfth station represents to us the death of Jesus on the Cross. Consider O my soul, that after three hours of agony our redeemer died upon the Cross for our salvation. My Jesus very justly should I spend the remainder of my life for you who sacrificed yours amidst such tortures for me. This I resolve to do. Help me by your grace through the merits of your death. Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory, etc. Miserere nostri, Domine, miserere nostri.
Holy Mother, grant etc.

Fac me tecum pie flere, / Crucifixo condolere / donec ego vixero.

Station XIII

V/. Adoramus te, Christe et benedicimus tibi.

R/. Quia per sanctam crucem et mortem tuam redemisti mundum.

The thirteenth station represents for us how the most sacred body of Jesus was taken down from the Cross and laid in the arms of his Blessed Mother. Consider O my soul, the overwhelming grief of Mary as she beheld her divine Son in her arms. Ah most holy Virgin! Through the merits of Jesus obtain for me the grace never to renew the reason for his death in my life, but that he may always live in me by his divine grace. Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory, etc. Miserere nostri, Domine, miserere nostri.

Holy Mother, grant etc.

Iuxta crucem tecum stare / et me tibi sociare / in planctu desidero.

Last station

V/. Adoramus te, Christe et benedicimus tibi.

R/. Quia per sanctam Crucem et mortem tuam redemisti mundum.

This last station represents to us the burial of our Redeemer. Consider O my soul, how the most sacred Body of Jesus was buried in the new sepulchre prepared for him. My Jesus I thank you for all you have suffered for me and I beg of you the grace to prepare my heart well to receive you well in Holy Communion and thus to make my soul your habitation forever. Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory etc. Miserere nostri, Domine, miserere nostri.
Holy Mother, grant etc.

Quando corpus morietur, / fac ut animae donetur / paradisi gloria.

V/. Salva nos, Christe Salvator, per virtutem crucis.

R/. Qui salvasti Petrum in mari, miserere nobis.

Oremus: Deus, qui unigeniti Filii tui pretioso sanguine vivificae crucis vexillum sanctificare voluisti, concede, quaesumus, eos qui eiusdem sanctae crucis gaudent honore, tua quoque ubique protectione gaudere. Per eumdem Christum Dominum nostrum. R. Amen.

V/. Divinum auxilium maneat semper nobiscum.

R/. Amen

###### Prayer of Pope Benedict XIII to implore from God the grace of not dying an unprepared for death

“Most merciful Lord Jesus, by your agony and sweat of blood and by your death deliver me, I beseech you, from a sudden and unprovided death.
Most benign Jesus, by your cruel and ignominious scourging and crowning with thorns, by your Cross and most bitter Passion, and by your goodness, I humbly beseech you not to let me die an unprovided death nor to pass away from this life without the sacraments.

My most loving Jesus, my Lord and my God, by all your sufferings and sorrows, by your precious blood and most sacred wounds and by your last words, : Deus, Deus meus, ut qui dereliquisti me? [Mk 15:34]. and by that loud cry: Father into your hands I commend my spirit; I most earnestly entreat you to preserve me from a sudden death. Your hands, O my Redeemer, have entirely made and fashioned me. I beg you to give me time for repentance and a happy death in your grace, that I may love, praise and bless you for eternity.

My Lord Jesus Christ, by those five wounds which you received on the Cross for love of us, help your servants redeemed by your most precious Blood... Sanguinisque pretiosi quem in mundi pretium. Amen.”

###### Prayer to St Joseph

“O most glorious St Joseph, fortunate spouse of Mary, you who merited being the guardian of the Saviour of the world, Jesus Christ, and embracing him tenderly already enjoyed heaven in anticipation! Obtain for me from the Lord complete forgiveness of my sins, the grace to imitate your virtues, so that I may always walk on the way that leads to heaven. Since you merited having Jesus and Mary around your bed at the point of death and sweetly breathed your last in their arms, I beg you to defend me from the enemies of my soul at the end of my life; so that consoled by the hope of flying with you to possess eternal glory in heaven I may breathe my last pronouncing the holy names of Jesus, Mary and Joseph.”

###### Prayer for a happy death

“Lord Jesus, God of goodness and Father or mercies, I approach you with a contrite and humble heart: to you I recommend my last hour and the decision of my eternal doom.

When my feet, benumbed, shall warn me that my mortal course is drawing to a close, merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When my hands, cold and trembling, shall no longer be able to clasp the crucifix, and against my will I am forced to let it fall on my bed of suffering, merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When my eyes, dim and troubled at the approach of death shall fix themselves on you, my last and only support, merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.
When my lips, cold and quivering, shall pronounce for the last time you adorable name, merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When my face, pale and livid, shall inspire the bystanders with compassion and awe, and my hair, bathed in the sweat of death, and stiffening on my head, shall forebode my approaching doom, merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When my ears, soon to be shut forever to the words of men, shall be open to hear your voice pronouncing the sentence by which my condition is to be fixed irrevocably for all eternity, merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When my imagination, agitated by fearful and horrible spectres, shall be drowned in an abyss of anguish; and my spirit, troubled with the memory of my ill-doings, and the fear of your justice, shall wrestle with the powers of darkness, who will strive to take from me the consoling sight of your mercies and plunge me into the pit of despair, merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When my weak heart, weighed down with the pain of my illness, shall be overtaken with the horror of death, and be exhausted by the efforts it has made against the enemies of my salvation, merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When I shall have shed my last tear, the sign of my dissolution, receive it as a sacrifice of expiation so that I may expire a victim of penance, and then in that dreadful moment, merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When those present encircling my bed shall be moved with compassion for me, and invoke your clemency on my behalf, merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.
When I shall have lost the use of my senses and when the world shall have vanished from my sight; when my agonising soul shall feel the sorrows of death, merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When my last sigh shall summon my soul from my body, accept it as a sign of holy impatience to come to you, and you, merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.
When my soul, trembling on my lips, shall bid adieu to this world, and leave my body lifeless, pale and cold, receive this separation as a homage which I willingly pay to your Divine Majesty and then, merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When at length my soul, admitted to your presence, shall first behold the immortal splendour of your Majesty, reject it not but receive me into the loving bosom of your mercy where I may ever sing your praises: merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

Let us pray: Oh God who have doomed all men to die but concealed from all the hour of their death grant that I may pass my days in the practice of holiness and justice and that I may deserve to quit this world in your holiness and love. through Jesus Christ Our Lord, who lives and reigns in the unity of the Holy Spirit ... Amen.” (Pius VII granted an indulgence of 100 to whoever recites this prayer every day and a plenary indulgence if you do so for a month).

###### Prayer for the souls in purgatory

“O almighty God who by the love which you bear for men deigned to take our humanity, to live laboriously, to suffer a most cruel Passion and finally to die on a Cross! I beseech you by the infinite merits purchased for us by your Precious Blood, look mercifully on the torments suffered by those holy souls in purgatory who, having departed this vale of tears in your grace, still suffer in cruel flames in order to atone for the sins for which they have not yet made full satisfaction to your Divine Justice. Accept, O merciful God the prayers which I offer for them, deliver them from that dark prison and call them to the glory of heaven. I recommend to you the souls of my relations and benefactors, spiritual and temporal, and in a special way those for whom I have been an occasion of sin by my bad example. Most Holy Virgin, Mother of Mercy, Comforter of the afflicted, intercede for those souls, that by your powerful intercession, they may be admitted to enjoy the kingdom which is prepared for them.”

V/. Te ergo, quaesumus, famulis tuis subveni.

R/. Quos pretioso Sanguine redemisti. Pater, Ave e Requiem.

###### On the choice of a state of life

Critical ed. in Giovanni Bosco, Il giovane provveduto per la pratica dei suoi doveri negli esercizi di cristiana pietà per la recita dell’Uffizio della B. Vergine, dei Vespri di tutto l’anno e dell’Uffizio dei morti coll’aggiunta di una scelta di laudi sacre. Torino, Tipografia e Libreria Salesiana 1880, pp. 75-78.

In His eternal decrees, God has destined each one of us to a state of life with its corresponding graces. Accordingly, as in every other case, so also in this all-important matter, the good Catholic should seek to discover the will of God following the example of Jesus Christ who said in fact that his sole purpose in coming down to us was to comply with the will of his eternal Father. It is then most important, dear children, that you choose your vocation wisely, so that you may enter the career for which the Lord has destined you.

Some souls, whom God wishes to favour particularly, receive a clear indication of the state to which he calls them. You cannot expect so much, but you have the consoling guarantee that God will direct you in the right way, provided you do not neglect the right means for making a prudent choice.

One of these means is to spend your childhood and youth without offending God, or else to atone by sincere penance for the time misspent in sin. Another means is humble and persevering prayer. Often repeat with St Paul: “Lord, what is it that you wish me to do?” Or with Samuel: “Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.” Or with the Psalmist: “Teach me to do your will, for you are my God.” Or use some other aspiration of love.

When the time has arrived for a decision, have recourse to God in frequent and very fervent prayer. Pray for guidance during the Holy Mass at which you assist, and offer up each Communion for the same purpose. You could also make a novena or a triduum, perform some act of mortification, or go on a pilgrimage to some noted shrine. Pray to the Blessed Virgin, who is the Mother of Good Counsel, ask the help of St. Joseph, her spouse, who faithfully kept the divine commandments; pray to your Guardian Angel and to your Patron Saints. It would be well also to prepare for your decision in such an important matter by making a retreat or a day of recollection.

Resolve to follow God's will whatever happens, and despite the disapproval of those who might give you more secular advice.

Should your parents or other individuals begin to oppose what you perceive to be the will of God in your regard, remember that this is the occasion to put into practice the great advice to obey God and not human beings. Conduct yourselves towards your parents respectfully and honourably; answer and treat them submissively and humbly, but without putting at risk the supreme welfare of your soul. Seek good advice on what to do, and then confide in him who can do all things. Consult experienced and God-fearing persons, and especially your confessor, to whom you should confide your vocation and your dispositions.

###### The young man who is faithful to his vocation

When St Francis de Sales understood at home that God was calling him to the priesthood, his parents observed that as the first born son he ought support and sustain them, and that his inclination to the clergy came from an indiscreet devotion and that he could also be holy in secular life. They felt it was better if he followed their intentions to offer him an honourable and advantageous marriage. But nothing could move him from his holy resolution. He constantly put God's will before that of his father and mother, and while he loved them tenderly and respected them deeply he preferred renouncing all the temporal advantages before lessening the grace of his vocation. His parents, notwithstanding their worldly outlook, were pious people and alter were happy with their son's resolve.

###### Prayer to know one's proper vocation

Here I am at your feet, O merciful Virgin, to implore from you the most important grace of my state in life. I only want to perfectly do the will of your Divine Son throughout my life. I ardently desire to choose the state that will most console me at the hour of my death. Grant Mother of Good Counsel, that I may hear a voice which removes every doubt from my mind. Since you are the Mother of my Saviour, also be the Mother of my salvation; because of you, O Mary do not enlighten me, who will? If you do not instruct me, Mother of Wisdom, who will teach me? Hear then, Mary, my humble prayers. Guide me, doubtful and vacillating, put me on the right path that leads to eternal life, because you are the only hope of virtue and life, the fruits of which are nothing but the fruits of honour and honesty. Three ‘Our Father’s, ‘Hail Mary’s and ‘Glory be’s.