



INTERNATIONAL FATIMA ROSARY CRUSADE

Newsletter

HELPING OUR LADY REACH OUT TO MILLIONS OF FAITHFUL SOULS

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Love of Duty

from *The Messenger of the Sacred Heart*

Sister Lucy continued to receive communications from Our Lady and Our Lord after the cycle of apparitions at Fatima in 1917. Referring to one of these communications, Sister Lucy wrote: "Here is the true penance which the Good Lord requests today: the sacrifice which everybody must impose on himself to lead a life of justice in the observance of His law.

"From Thursday to Friday, being in the chapel with my superiors' permission, at midnight, Our Lord told me: *'The penance that I request and require now is the sacrifice demanded of everybody by the accomplishment of his own duty and the observance of My law.'*"

Thus Our Lord Himself has explicitly expressed to us the necessity of performing one's duty. The following article discusses this important subject.

All the evil of men's lives, wrote a commentator of the *Spiritual Exercises* of Saint Ignatius, comes from this, that they follow their likes and dislikes instead of duty. Self-will, self-interest, self-love in its thousand forms, anything but sheer duty, furnishes the ordinary motives of human actions.

Duty is a distasteful theme: the world is forever re-echoing with the question of rights – rights of women, rights of labor and capital, Rights of Man! But so much less is said about the infinitely more important question, the all-ordering, all-pacifying theme – the Duty of Man. The duty of the mother, the spouse and the daughter; the

Continued on page 2

Our Lady of Fatima and the Sacrifice of Patience

by Saint Francis de Sales



Saint Francis

At Fatima the Blessed Virgin asked that we "pray and make sacrifices." There are many sacrifices we can make for the sanctification of our souls and the souls of others, but one of the most basic sacrifices we can make is to have patience in all things, especially adversity. In all your actions, encounters and crosses, remember the value of being patient; and when it is difficult to have patience, recall the tremendous good you can do by offering up your trials and patiently bearing them.

Patience is necessary for you; that, doing the will of God, you may receive the promise, (Heb. x. 36). If our Savior Himself has declared (Luke xxi. 19), *In your patience you shall possess your souls*, should it not be a great happiness for man to possess his soul? And the more perfect our patience, the more absolutely do we possess them. Let us frequently call to mind, that as Our Lord has saved us by patient sufferings, so we also ought to work out our salvation by sufferings and afflictions; enduring injuries and contradictions with all possible meekness.

Limit not your patience to this or that kind of injuries and afflictions, but extend it universally to all those that it

Continued on page 3

In this Issue:

Love of Duty	1
Our Lady of Fatima and the Sacrifice of Patience.....	1
Apostolate Happenings	4
Readers' Mail	4

sacred reciprocal duties of the laborer and the capitalist; the duty of man to his fellow-man, to his country, to other countries; the duties of morality and religion, in public and in private; duty to the innocent and the weak, the suffering and the poor – if men thought of these things more and of rights less, we would have far less mental and physical misery, fewer unavailing tears, less revolution and bloodshed, fewer souls descending to the second death. All true reformation begins and ends with the demands of duty; all false reformation, with the clamor for rights.

The question of duty is becoming, in our day, more keenly important than ever. In the midst of increasing immorality, of a rashness of conduct that will brook no restraint, of the disavowal of most sacred family and social obligations, in the midst of religious indifference, and of political theories which are summed up in the meanest and most unjust selfishness in both civic and national affairs – in the midst of disorder so pernicious to individuals and to society, the question of duty becomes a vital one.

The first and most important duties are those which we owe to God and the law of God. We have been created to praise, reverence and serve God, and by so doing to save our souls. This indicates the duty of internal and external worship, God's threefold claim upon His creatures, the homage of the tongue, the heart, the body. How can we hope for the favor and protection of God, regarding ourselves and those who are dear to us, if we refuse to comply with the first and noblest of our duties, that of worshipping God? And what must result, especially in the ardor of youth, but that state spoken of by the Psalmist – "Man when he was in honor did not understand: he hath been compared to senseless beasts, and made like to them"? (Ps. 48, 21). Alas! the disillusion comes rapidly enough.

Parents have the most sacred obligations on account of their state and their children. The obligations are often painful, and sometimes demand supreme self-sacrifice. Yet they are the appointed way of salvation. Parents shall be saved through their children, we are assured by the Word of God; that is, compliance with the obligations of their state and the faithful fulfillment of their duties to their children – duties of example, instruction, restraint – this is their means of gaining Heaven, and disobedience in this regard can only bring misfortune both here and hereafter. It is an evil and shortsighted policy to distrust God's providence, and refuse to do what He commands, in the hope of escaping some temporal inconvenience or pain.

The appointed way, also, for children to be saved from



an evil life and an unfortunate one, as well as from the greater evils of a life to come, is by obedience to their parents. "Honor thy father and thy mother, that thou mayest be long-lived upon the land which the Lord thy God will give thee" (Exod. 20, 12). The heartless disrespect for parents and the unrestrained rashness with which the young place themselves in the gravest dangers are the sad causes of the excesses into which so many fall, and which they afterwards so long and bitterly regret. The Fourth Commandment, while ordaining the relations of the family, which is the foundation of the society, ordains also the reciprocal obligations of all superiors and inferiors.

Duties to our fellow-men and to our country – not the senseless, so-called patriotism of boasting and of war, but fidelity to justice and to charity and to honor; an uprightness unbent either by fear or a meaner lust of gold – these are the duties upon which our social and spiritual welfare reposes. Infidelity to these is more disgraceful in a Catholic than in anybody else; nor may we hope that those who are unfaithful to God will be faithful to the higher interests of their country or to their obligations towards their fellow-men.

Citizens of an earthly fatherland, in which we have not a lasting dwelling-place, we have another country, which is above, in which "there is no change, nor shadow of alteration" (St. James, I, 17). †

shall please God to send you. Some are unwilling to suffer any tribulations, but those that are honorable; for example, to be wounded in battle, to be a prisoner of war, to be persecuted for religion, or impoverished by some lawsuit determined in their favor: now, these people do not love the tribulation, but the honor wherewith it is accompanied; whereas he that is truly patient suffers indifferently tribulations, whether accompanied by ignominy or honor.

To be despised, reprehended, or accused by wicked men, is pleasant to a man of good heart; but to suffer blame and ill treatment from the virtuous, or from our friends and relations, is the *test* of true patience.

I admire the meekness with which the great St. Charles Borromeo suffered a long time in public reprehensions that a great preacher ... uttered against him in the pulpit, more than all the assaults he received from others; for ... the evils we suffer from good men are much more insupportable than those we suffer from others: and yet it often happens that two good men, having each of them the best intentions, through a diversity of opinion, foment great persecutions and contradictions against each other.

Be patient, not only with respect to the subject of the affliction which may befall you, but also with regard to its accessories or accidental circumstances. Many could be content to encounter evils, provided they might not be incommoded by them. I am not vexed, says one, at being poor, if it had not disabled me to serve my friends, to give my children proper education, or to live as honorable as I could wish. It would give me no concern, says another, were it not that the world would think it happened through my own fault. Another would be content to suffer the scandal patiently, provided no one would believe the detractor. Others are willing to suffer some part of the evil, but not the whole.

Now, I say, we must not only bear sickness with patience, but also be content to suffer sickness under any dis-

order and in any place, amongst those persons, and with those inconveniences which God pleases; and the same must be said of other tribulations.

When any evil befalls you, apply the remedies that may be in your power, agreeably to the will of God: for to act otherwise, would be to tempt divine Providence. Having done this, wait with resignation for the success it may please God to send; and should the remedies overcome the evil, return Him thanks with humility; but if, on the contrary, the evils overcome the remedies, bless Him with patience.

Complain as little as possible of the wrongs you suffer; for, commonly speaking, he that complains sins, because self-love magnifies the injuries we suffer, and makes us believe them greater than they really are.



Remember that all your sufferings, either in quality or quantity, are not comparable to His, and that you can never suffer anything for Him equal to that which He has endured for you ...

Amidst the contradictions which shall infallibly befall you in the exercise of devotion, remember the words of Our Lord (John, xvi. 21): *A woman when she is in labor hath sorrow because her hour is come; but when she hath brought forth her child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world.* For you have conceived Jesus Christ, the noblest Child in the world, in your soul, and until He is quite brought forth you cannot but suffer in your labor; but be of good courage, these sorrows once past, everlasting joy shall remain with you for having brought Him forth. Now, you shall have wholly brought Him forth, when you have entirely formed Him in your heart and in your works, by an imitation of His life.

In sickness, offer up all your griefs and pains as a sacrifice to

Our Lord, and beseech Him to unite them with the torments He suffered for you. Obey your physician, take your medicines, food, and other remedies, for the love of God, remembering the gall He took for your sake. Desire to be cured, that you may serve Him; but refuse not to continue sick, that you may obey Him, and dispose yourself for death, if it be His pleasure, that you may praise and enjoy Him for ever.

Continued on page 4

INTERNATIONAL FATIMA ROSARY CRUSADE

Mail



prayers at the Eucharistic Sacrifice that you celebrate every day.

With love for Jesus through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, His Mother,

Dear Father Gruner,

I don't know what I'd do without you. You have been and will continue to be in my prayers and thoughts. Thank God for you dear Father Gruner!

May V., AB

Dear Father Gruner,

I pray our Beloved Mother Mary, the Queen of Heaven, to descend upon you Her special blessings, to give you health and the strength to continue your mission.

Friends in the love of Jesus, Mary and Joseph,

Marquise T., ON

Dear Father Gruner,

We love you and we are very fortunate and blessed to be your friends and supporters, and to be included in your


Daniel and Gilberte R., SK

OUR LADY OF FATIMA AND THE SACRIFICE OF PATIENCE

Continued from page 3

Remember that as bees, whilst making their honey, live upon a bitter provision, so we can never perform acts of greater sweetness, nor better compose the honey of excellent virtues, than whilst we eat the bread of bitterness, and live in the midst of afflictions. And as the honey that is gathered from the flowers of thyme, a small, bitter herb, is the best, so the virtue which is exercised in the bitterness of the meanest and most abject tribulations is preferable.

Consider frequently Christ Jesus crucified, naked, blasphemed, slandered, forsaken, and overwhelmed with all sorts of troubles, sorrows, and labors; and remember that all your sufferings, either in quality or quantity, are not comparable to His, and that you can never suffer anything for Him equal to that which He has endured for you.

Consider the torments the martyrs have suffered, and those which many at present endure, more grievous without any comparison than yours, and then say: Alas! are not my sufferings consolations, and my pains pleasures, in comparison of those who, without any relief, assistance, or mitigation, live a continual death, overcharged with afflictions infinitely greater than mine. 

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Apostolate Happenings

January 22, 2004 marked the 31st anniversary of the tragic Roe v. Wade Supreme Court decision, which “legalized” abortion in the United States. Every year since the crime of abortion was institutionalized by this decision, people from across the country gather to march from the Washington Monument to the Supreme Court building, in protest.

This year the Fatima Center joined the protest. We went prepared with flyers and prayer cards to distribute, and had a six foot long banner made for the occasion, which read: “End Abortion. End Terrorism. End all War. Obey Fatima. Consecrate Russia Now!”

We posted ourselves in front of the Supreme Court building with the Pilgrim Virgin Statue of Our Lady of Fatima, where Father Gruner led dozens of Rosaries, and staff members distributed material to people passing by, and later to the crowd marching up Capitol Hill. While the responses to our message varied, it was particularly edifying to see the many reverent reactions to the Pilgrim Virgin statue.

Countless people crowded around the statue of Our Lady to recite Rosary after Rosary, many of them kneeling on the cold pavement. Many others stopped while passing by to look at Her for a moment, after which they made the sign of the Cross and continued along.

Undoubtedly, the Blessed Virgin's presence was an occasion of grace for many of Her children, and we were blessed to be able to publicly demonstrate that the fight against abortion is inextricably united to the Message of Fatima, which provides the only real answer to this crisis and the many others that plague our society.