

My Daily Bread

A Summary of
The Spiritual Life

Simplified and Arranged
for Daily Reading,
Reflection and Prayer

BY ANTHONY J. PAONE, S. J.

1954

PRESENTED TO

Name

Date/Occasion

Personal Note

IMPRIMI POTEST:

JOHN J. McMAHON, S. J.
Provincial, New York Province.

NIHIL OBSTAT:

MARTIN J. HEALY, S. T. D.
Censor Librorum.

IMPRIMATUR:

THOMAS EDMUNDUS MOLLOY, S. T. D.
Archiepiscopus-Episcopus
Brooklynensis.

Brooklyn, XXVII Februarii 1954.

Copyright © 2017 Confraternity of the Precious Blood

All rights reserved. With the exception of short excerpts used in articles and critical reviews, no part of this work may be reproduced, transmitted, or stored in any form whatsoever, printed or electronic, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

ISBN: 978-1-61890-772-1

Published by:
TAN Books
PO Box 410487
Charlotte, NC 28241
www.TANBooks.com

Printed and bound in the United States of America

Foreword

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:

MY 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:**

MY 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