

MORTIFICATION

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Link on page 18- BOOK 2:
33 DAYS PREPARATION for TOTAL CONSECRATION to Jesus thru Mary
Entrance into the City of Mary by Architect Marie Borromeo Cancio

Introduction

I need to explain how I came about what's written below so credit can be given to whom it is due. Sometime March 2014, I had spent several days working hard, writing about "Mortification" which I wanted to include in a book I was preparing. I had finished writing it when unexpectedly Mama Mary started dictating a much better talk on mortification than what I had written that I discarded what I had written altogether. To the one she dictated by way of locution, all I had to do was add the specific Bible verse nos., some quotations from saints and questions for examination of conscience.

ALL FOR LOVE: Mortification of Exterior Senses

"Master, which is the greatest commandment in the law?
Jesus said to him: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. And the second is like to this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments depends the whole law and the prophets."
(Matthew 22: 36-40)

Love is the most important commandment. It is so spoken about but is indeed forgotten because love nowadays derive from love of self and not love for God. That is why this world is what it is, a chaotic world where people are afraid to live, to run out of food because it has ran out of love. That is the most important commandment: to love God with all your heart and to love others as thyself. Everything else Jesus has taught you derives from that.

Staying In Love With God Thru Mortification or Self-Denial

What is mortification? A sacrifice of yourself for love of God or for love of neighbor out of love for God. Men have emphasized mortification as a means of holiness. Doubtless, holiness is important to aim at and without it one cannot enter heaven. But you have missed the point if you view it only from that standpoint. Mortification, above all is the self-sacrifice of your bodily senses, emotions and the interior faculties of intellect and will in order to free your soul to love God.

Mortification Of External Senses

God has given you senses to know things through your sight, touch, taste and hearing. These senses will become uncontrollable when you continually give in to all their wishes. As a result you are blinded and no longer able to see, touch, taste nor hear God and your neighbor. When you do not practice moderation or temperance, your appetites become very hard to control. Thus, eating to the point of gluttony makes your body sleepy and your mind sleep. Giving in to your ears and sight and touch out of curiosity leads to sins of gossip, judgments and impurity. So the purpose of mortification or self-denial is for purity of mind, body and heart so we may hear what God's will is for us at every moment. Time is too short to love Jesus!

Eyes

So much sin has begun with lack of mortification of the eyes. King David who wrote so many beautiful psalms to God, and who God had called a "man after my own heart" did not mortify his eyes. He kept looking out of the window and thus desired another man's wife, went to bed with her and had her husband killed in battle. " if your eye should cause you to sin, tear it out and throw it away: it is better for you to enter into life with one eye, than to have two eyes and be thrown into the hell of fire." (Matthew 18:9)

How many TV /movie scenes and magazine pages can you avoid so as not to fall into desires as David did!
Oh if you would but look at others with Mama Mary's eyes, you would see souls instead for whom you can say a prayer.

Ears

Oh what wondrous music man has created with which to rest one's soul and praise God! But instead of that, you open our ears wide to hear the latest gossip or to know everything including those that are not your business.

Spiritual Exercises:

What mortifications of the eyes and ears can you do so you can see, hear and love Jesus more?

Mouth (Speech)

This golden mouth that God has created with which to communicate with Him and with your fellow men becomes a senseless cymbal when you do not control it. Better to be silent than to say anything negative about your neighbor or yourself. Let God be the judge of everything including yourself. Let this golden mouth instead not disdain to speak with the little ones—the poor and insignificant to worldly eyes, the boring friend who needs your golden heart to listen to what he has to say.

And what can be said of this little instrument so versatile for speech and taste? What disasters it has caused and lives it has ruined when it speaks without restraint. Oh foolish tongue, do you not know that what you have said you cannot gather back? Speak instead with the wisdom God has given you, that thinks before it speaks, that loves and forgives instead of cause the least pain. "So always treat others as you would want them to treat you." (Matthew 7:12) Speak of others as you would want to hear about yourself: just the positive things. The negatives about your neighbor don't need to be broadcasted but confined to him in a personal conversation, a brotherly correction so that he may change for love of God.

"Always remain silent when you feel indignation surge up within you- even when you have reason to be angry. For in spite of your discretion, you always say more than you want to in such moments."- St. Josemaria Escriva

"No idle word should be uttered. I understand a word to be idle when it serves no good purpose, either for myself or for another, and was not intended to do so." St. Ignatius of Loyola

Mouth (Taste): Smoking, Excessive Drinking, Gluttony.

"Do not join those who drink too much wine or gorge themselves on meat, for drunkards and gluttons become poor, and drowsiness clothes them in rags." Proverbs lumps drunkards and gluttons together! (Proverbs 23:21)

"I did not season my food. I drank tea and coffee without sugar, I took less gravy with meat. Etc. The honey of self-denial tasted more delicious than the vinegar of self-indulgence." (Blessed Dina Belanger)

"Gluttony is the forerunner of impurity." (St. Josemaria Escriva, The Way, 126)

"For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit." (Romans 14:17)

Moderation: Jesus and the Holy Family, the Apostles and early Christians all led simple lives and practiced moderation. Simplicity and moderation in everything you do: eating, sleeping, resting and relaxing. To spend so much on yourselves is to waste resources which so many of your poor brothers and sisters lack. But above all, to seek continuously more- of greater sophistication, exoticness and expense- is to be a slave to your appetites, your bodies and minds. Oh poor you, because after all this, your appetite is left unquenched, your stomach bloated, your mind dull and your soul malnourished for all care has gone to your body.

"Do you see how the corpse of the loved one disintegrates in foul and reeking liquids? That, then, is the body beautiful! Contemplate it and draw your own conclusions." (St. Escriva, the Way, 741)

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What are the vices and 'excesses' that you need to give up? Ask Jesus' help to eat, live and relax simply as the early Christians did so that your body does not enslave you and you can share your time and resources with those who are in need.

What did Jesus do, the Jesus you said you will follow? His life was of penance and his preaching never stopped saying it, " From that moment Jesus begun his preaching with the message, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand'.(Matthew 4:17)

And what of St. Paul? Where did he get all that fire of love for God with which he reached thousands of Greeks and Jews alike? "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, lust, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is the service of idols... But now put also all away: anger, indignation, malice, blasphemy, filthy speech out of your mouth. Lie not one to another: stripping yourselves of the old man with his deeds, And putting on the new, him who is renewed unto knowledge, according to the image of him that created him." (Col 3:5-11)

Oh the death of Jesus on the cross, oh the whip and the thorns that struck Him so mercilessly and drew his Precious blood! Shall this not draw out from you mortifications to mingle with His, to make up for your ingratitude and sins? Give me Oh Lord a grateful mind and humble heart that will seek the little acts of love from my passions, intellect, memory and will.

"That joke, that witty remark held on the tip of your tongue; the cheerful smile for those who annoy you; that silence when you're unjustly accused; your friendly conversation with people whom you find boring and tactless; **the daily effort to overlook one irritating detail or another in the persons who live with you... this, with perseverance, is indeed solid interior mortification.**" (St. Josemaria Escriva, *The Way*, 173)

Passions / Emotions

Love and hatred, desire and fear, joy, sadness, and anger—passions accompany your thoughts and actions, to render them good or bad. Thank you my God for giving them to me with which to feel you, to love you, to praise you, to fear to sadden you, to fight for your Laws, to love my neighbor and my country.

Tell Satan: Begone and tempt me not to let my feelings be my Master! I shall overlook my family member's annoying action and not give him the silent treatment. I shall not eat without offering a mortification. I shall stop thinking of hurts which only make me angry and sad. I shall forgive as Jesus who always forgives me.

Oh where can you find real freedom from these feelings which leave you dissipated, unfocused and unproductive? Remember that time in your life when you had made sacrifices/mortifications? Why have you thrown these habits of self-denials aside? Have you thought yourself a saint and not a mortal man inclined to love yourself, the creations of your mind and unrestrained will? Wake up and practice these mortifications again lest you lose all that you have so far gained.

" I will now instruct you on what your holocaust shall consist of, in everyday life, so as to preserve you from illusions. **You shall accept all sufferings with love.** Do not be afflicted if your heart often experiences repugnance and dislike for sacrifice. All its power rests in the will, and so these contrary feelings, far from lowering the value of the sacrifice in My eyes, will enhance it." (St. Faustina , Diary no. 1767)

SPIRITUAL EXERCISE:

1. Do you have grudges, ill-feelings, or unresolved issues with anyone? Why and who is at fault? If you are, then ask forgiveness and make amends the soonest possible. If it's the other person who is at fault, forgive sincerely and pray for him/her, and see how you can resolve it, even making the first move. Offer your good act to Jesus thru Mary.

Will And Intellect

"Oh Father... not my Will but thine be done." "Oh, how I should like to be hypnotized by Our Lord!... with what meekness I have surrendered my will to Him! Yes, **I want Him to take over all my faculties so that I no longer perform human and personal actions but utterly divine ones, inspired and directed by the spirit of love!**" (St. Therese of Lisieux)

Lord, please help me to die to my Will in everything. Let me die to intellectual pride, let me think others far better than me. Oh Jesus, so many chances of dying to my Will at work and at home, don't let me pass them by : to wake up early and be on time for work, to follow my boss instead of insisting on my way when he's not looking, to overcome my laziness and finish my job to the last detail, to give up my opinion or not even to say it so I may listen to others, ... Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make my heart like unto thine... always living for the others to the point of dying...

Imagination

Oh imagination, what a gift and a shame! **A gift- with which to imagine the dreams God has placed in your mind and heart, and to declare them done in His Mighty Name!** A shame- running wild because I'm doing nothing, wanting to know and see everything, fed by hours of TV and useless magazines. Flee from these for they only make it harder to control your imagination. Help me dear guardian angel to catch my imagination as soon as it draws useless thoughts that may lead to temptation. The **best mortification for my imagination: to live in the present moment**, forgetting yesterday which is gone forever and tomorrow which is in God's good hands.

Consoling Jesus With Our Smiles

"Let us make our heart a little garden of delight where Jesus may come to find rest." **"When I am suffering a great deal, instead of adopting an air of sadness I answer with a smile.** At first I never used to manage it, but now it is a habit which I am very glad to have contracted." "It hurts the good God enough to have to test us on earth without having to listen to us complaining of how hardly we are being used. So we should not let anyone notice how we are being hurt. It is really a question of delicacy and tact not to complain of the heat and cold, or wipe away sweat, or rub our frozen hands together -- or if we do, to do it secretly, so as not to reproach the good God."

"The sufferings which God sends us are tokens of His love and favor. How rude and unmannered it would be to accept them with a gloomy countenance, and so burden Him with our ingratitude." (St. Therese of Lisieux, *St. Therese's Little Way* by Von Balthasar)

"Whoever lives in my Will loses his temperament and acquires Mine. Therefore, **in the soul that does my Will is found a temperament that is pleasant, attractive, penetrating, dignified, and generally simple—of childlike simplicity.** In a word, she resembles me in everything." (Jesus to Blessed Luisa Piccarreta, Vol11: Feb. 24, 1912).

SPIRITUAL EXERCISE:

1. **Observe yourself. Do I listen carefully to what other people say, and wait for them to finish before I speak? Before I speak or say an opinion, do I make sure that this is sensible and will truly help?**
2. **Do I have thoughts and imaginations which are negative and unnecessary? Cast them out and ask Jesus and Mama Mary to fill your mind and heart with love, peace, & joy.**