

The Virtue Chronicles

Love of God

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The Little Servant Maid

A holy hermit was once troubled with a temptation of pride; he had spent so many years in the practice of prayer and penance that he began to imagine he was the holiest person in the world.

While he was thinking of this, God made known to him that he was mistaken, and that he was not nearly so holy, nor so far advanced in perfection and in the love of God, as a certain poor waiting-maid in a hotel in the city.

This astonished the good hermit. "How can it be possible," he said to himself, "that a simple maid in a hotel can be equal to me in virtue, since I have done nothing else for many years but fast and pray continually? I must go and visit her, and ask her what she does to make her more agreeable in the eyes of God than I am."

So he went to the city, and easily found the person of whom he was in search. When he had told her what God had revealed to him in the vision, he asked her to let him know what great practices of piety she performed that made God love her so much, and made her more perfect in His eyes than he was.

"My Father," she replied, "I do not know what God can see in me that can please Him so much; I am only a poor simple waiting-maid, and I have no learning. All that I can say to you is that I endeavour to perform all my actions with the greatest care, in order that I may please God and do His blessed will. When I am carrying wood for the kitchen fire, I think of the love of Jesus in carrying His cross for me, and I tell Him that I love Him because He is so good; and in the same way, in all my other works, I always try to think of Him in some way or other."

The hermit returned home, thanking God for having put in the power of even the simplest and lowliest of His children to love Him so much, and sometimes even more than those who have consecrated themselves entirely to His service.

Word Search

H	D	C	O	M	M	A	N	D	M	E	N	T	G	S
S	F	D	G	S	T	V	S	T	R	G	C	A	W	E
G	F	T	R	F	G	I	G	F	X	G	M	C	C	G
T	D	U	D	F	I	R	S	T	D	F	H	H	H	H
H	C	Y	G	G	J	T	L	K	G	U	H	F	I	J
B	H	R	G	N	H	U	C	Y	U	U	U	I	L	F
F	A	M	C	J	J	E	S	U	S	M	E	I	D	V
H	R	N	B	N	D	F	S	D	M	C	T	I	R	D
G	I	N	J	K	A	N	D	R	G	U	K	I	E	H
J	T	H	F	G	T	A	N	O	G	K	O	C	N	D
D	Y	C	D	B	N	M	G	L	O	V	E	M	G	G
Z	Y	H	Y	O	H	H	H	G	D	T	H	G	M	G
C	T	E	J	U	T	M	H	F	F	G	S	F	H	F
B	N	D	V	T	R	U	L	Y	D	D	F	F	S	Y
S	T	D	V	S	Y	W	E	H	S	D	V	D	S	F

WORD BANK

Virtue Love Lord
 Jesus Truly Charity
 Children God First
 Commandment

St. Benedict Joseph Labre's Instruction on How to Love God

One day St. Benedict Joseph Labre, having gone to see a poor sick man, spoke to him in words inspired by his own great fervour on the love of God.

When the poor man had listened to him in silence for a short time, he suddenly asked him: "My brother, tell me, I pray thee, how can I love God as much as I ought to do, and as He deserves to be loved."

The Saint said to him: "To love God as He deserves to be loved it is necessary that we should have three hearts joined together in one. The first one, all on fire with love of God, ought to make us think on Him continually, and, above all other things, to bear with patience during our whole life the sufferings and trials He may be pleased to send us.

"The second heart, made of flesh and blood, ought to make us come to the assistance of our fellow-beings, made as we ourselves are, and to help them in their temporal necessities by affording them all the relief in our power, and in their spiritual wants by instruction, by counsel, by example, and by prayer. This second heart of ours should in a particular manner feel compassion for poor sinners, and should unceasingly ask God to open the eyes of their souls to see the sad condition in which they are placed, and to induce them to do penance for their sins; it also should be filled with a tender compassion for the poor suffering souls that are in Purgatory.

"The third heart within us ought to be, as it were, of bronze, to be employed in loving ourselves in the manner God desires. It should resist all temptation to self-esteem, or thinking oneself to be of any importance; it should make us go against our natural desires, and keep our flesh in subjection by fasting and abstinence.

“The more you banish from your soul the thought of self, the more will charity reign in it, and the greater will your recompense be in the world to come.”

This was the advice St. Benedict Joseph Labre gave him.

A Favoured Child of Jesus

There lived in Spain a very holy woman whose name was Jane Rodriguez, who from her infancy received from Jesus many miraculous marks of love for our encouragement and instruction.

One day, when Jane was only seven years old, and while she was praying with great devotion before a picture of the Holy Child Jesus, a dazzling brightness filled the room, and the Blessed Virgin appeared to her, holding the Divine Child in her arms. Jane bowed down in profound adoration, and contemplated with admiration the beauty of Mary and the majesty of Jesus.



Our Lady said to her: “My daughter, what do you think of my little Child Jesus? Do you not think that everyone ought to love Him? Would you yourself not like to have Him as your own dearest friend?”

“Yes, my Lady,” answered Jane; “that is my one only desire.”

As soon as she said these words, Jesus stretched out His little hands as if to embrace her, and Mary pressed her to her heart. Jesus then gave her His blessing, and the vision disappeared from her sight, leaving her soul filled with a happiness which it would be vain to attempt to describe.

Jesus is not satisfied with words only. He wishes you to prove by your actions that you really love Him. He says in His Holy Gospel: “If you love Me, keep My commandments.”

“WE SHOULD
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SAINT BERNARD

A Beautiful Flower Destroyed

St. Rose of Lima loved to be alone, that she might be able to speak continually with God. Her father had a large garden attached to his house, and this was to her a little Paradise. In a corner of the garden she built for herself a rustic cell, in which she loved to hide herself, and there, though in the midst of a great city, she lived as if she were in an uninhabited desert.

Around her little cell she planted the choicest flowers, and cultivated them with great care. There was one amongst them which she loved more than all the rest. This was the passion-flower. It grew up and covered her cell, and its beautiful flowers continually reminded her of what was dearest to her heart—the sufferings of Jesus.



There was also another flower which she trained up with great care; she called it her “delight”, and she used often to stand beside it for a long time, admiring its beauty and inhaling its sweet perfume.

One morning, when she went as usual to water it, she found it pulled out by the root, and lying on the ground quite withered. This sight filled her with sorrow, and she cried bitterly:

“O my darling flower, who has done this to you?”

Our Blessed Lord at the same instant appeared to her, and said: “My daughter, what is the matter with you, and why are you so sad?”

“Don’t you see, O Lord, that some cruel person has destroyed my beautiful flower?”

“Some cruel person!” exclaimed Our Lord. “Well, then, know that it

was I Who did it.”

“And why, O Lord, did you pull it out?”

“Why? Because you are too fond of it. Did you not call it your ‘delight’, your ‘darling flower’? And did you not say that it was the joy of your heart to look at it? Now, my child, I want to be the only joy of your heart; I want you to give your whole heart to Me; for am I not the Flower of the field, and the Lily of the valley?”

You see, therefore, my child, how much Jesus desires to live in your soul, and that nothing pleases Him so much as to see you living for Him.

When the hour of death comes, if you have loved God all your lifetime with a tender childlike love, death will have no terrors for you, for you shall then sweetly die in the arms of Jesus, Whom you have always loved.

The Pilgrim's Desire Fulfilled

St. Bernardine of Siena tells us of a gentleman, well known for his fervour and piety, who made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

He first stopped at Nazareth, where the mystery of the Incarnation was accomplished. He then proceeded to Bethlehem, to kneel at the spot in which Our Lord first deigned to visit this earth as a suffering Infant.

He next walked by the banks of the Jordan, the scene of Our Lord's baptism, and went to the desert which had witnessed that forty days' fast; to the mountain where Jesus was transfigured; to the house at Jerusalem consecrated by the institution of the Holy Eucharist; to the Garden of Olives; and to Calvary, where Jesus died. He visited the scene of Our Lord's burial and resurrection, and finally ascended Mount Olivet, fondly recalling to mind the blessing which He gave to His Apostles before His ascension. After visiting every place which was in any way connected with Our Lord's life or death, with a heart glowing with love he exclaimed: “O Jesus, Jesus, my much-beloved Saviour, since I can no longer follow Thy

footsteps on earth, take me to Thyself in Heaven, that I may see Thee face to face—Thee whom I love with my whole heart.”

His prayer was immediately heard, for no sooner was it uttered than he expired. The intensity of his love for Jesus, and his ardent desire of being with Him, had broken his heart; and after death these words were found engraven on his breast: “Jesus, my Love!”

How Many Saint Quotes Can You Memorize?

“Love God, serve God: everything is in that.” ~ St. Clare of Assisi

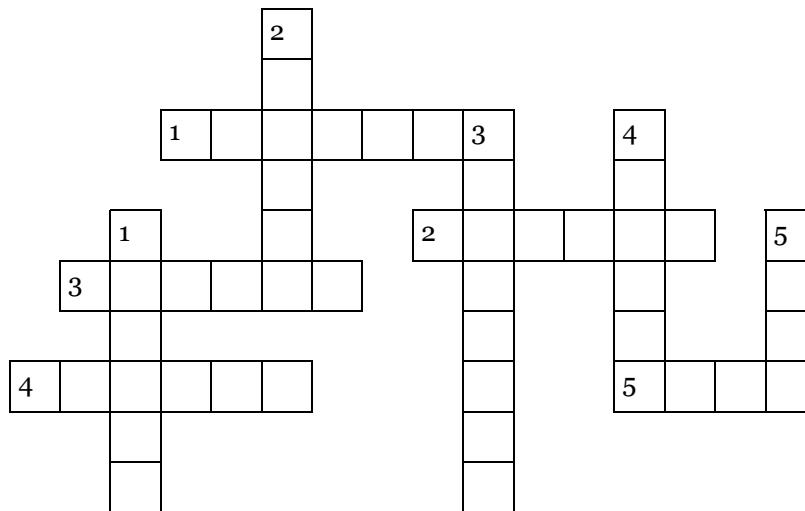
“The soul who is in love with God is a gentle, humble and patient soul.” ~ St. John of the Cross

“God must be loved first, in order that one’s neighbour, too, may be loved in God.” ~ St. Bernard

“In the royal galley of Divine Love, there is no galley slave: all the rowers are volunteers.” ~ St. Francis de Sales

“Not without reward is God loved, although He should be loved without thought of reward.” ~ St. Bernard

Crossword Puzzle



Across:

1. The hermit visited a _____ - maid.
2. Jane received a _____ from Mary and Jesus.
3. St. Benedict Joseph Labre said we are to have three what?
4. St. Rose of Lima's flower was pulled out of the ?
5. Who did the flower belong to that Jesus pulled up from the ground?

Down:

1. Which heart, according to St. Benedict Joseph Labre, is made out of flesh and blood?
2. Who went to visit a servant-maid?
3. The hermit was _____ that he might be the holiest person on earth.
4. Jesus pulled St. Rose's _____ out of the ground.
5. We must _____ God with all our hearts.

The Three Young Maidens

One day a pious lady went to a church to hear Mass. During the Holy Sacrifice God was pleased to grant her the following vision: After the consecration she saw our Divine Lord Himself present on the altar under the appearance of a little child. As she was looking on Him with great love, she saw Him come down from the altar, and go over to three young maidens who were also present at Mass.



When He reached the first one, He appeared to lavish on her many marks of tenderness, and to speak to her in words of endearment. After that, He went towards the second one and smiled on her, but did not treat her in the same affectionate manner, in which He had treated the first. Lastly He went to the third one, and, raising up His hand, struck her a heavy blow on the face, which made her fall to the ground. He then returned to the altar and disappeared.

The lady was for a time lost in astonishment and what she had just seen; and the more she thought about it, the more anxious she became to discover what was meant by the vision.

And as she prayed to God that He would be pleased to manifest to her the meaning of it, she saw standing at her side the holy Child Jesus as she had seen Him on the altar.

“My child,” He said to her, “those three young virgins are all most dear to Me; they are My faithful spouses, and they all love Me with the greatest affection. The first one whom I went to, and to whom you saw Me show so many marks of affection, is only just beginning to advance towards perfection; I must, therefore, treat her with great kindness, as a mother treats a young child. The second one loves Me with her whole soul,

and although I did not treat her as I did the other one she did not complain, because she has more at heart My Divine pleasure than her own satisfaction; still, from time to time I have to grant her some spiritual consolation, that she may not grow weary in her life of piety.

“As to the third one,” continued the holy Child, “she loves Me with the most perfect love, and is willing to receive from My hands afflictions and trials of all kinds, and does not look for any consolation. And although I send her crosses, she is willing to receive them all, not only without complaining, but even with the greatest joy, because it is My will to send them. Therefore I love her more than the other two, although I treat her with greater severity.”

The lady was grateful to God for this beautiful lesson, which will be for you also, my child, an encouragement to love your Heavenly Father always, in afflictions as well as in times of joy.

“O Sacred Heart of Jesus! Living and life-giving Fountain of eternal life, infinite treasure of the Divinity, glowing furnace of Love! Thou art my refuge and my sanctuary.

O my adorable and lovely Saviour, consume my heart with that burning fire with which Thine is inflamed. Pour down on my soul those graces which flow from Thy Love, and let my heart be so united with Thine, that our wills may be one, and mine in all things conformed to Thine. May Thy Will be the rule alike of my desires and of all my actions. Amen.”

~ St. Gertrude

Problem Questions

1. You find a poor man alone in a hut. He is very ill and you advise him to make his peace with God. He tells you that his sins are too great to be forgiven. What sin does he commit by entertaining such thoughts? What would you tell him? Could you give him an example of great sinners who were forgiven by God because they repented sincerely?
2. Your parents attend a funeral service at a Protestant church and wish you to go along. May Catholics attend such services? Would they be allowed to attend any Protestant services? Catholics are eager to have Protestants come to their church; why should they not return the courtesy?
3. A young man is leading a very sinful life. He realizes that he should change his ways and make his peace with God, but he always tells himself that there will be time enough tomorrow. What sin does he commit?
4. Mary is in serious trouble and becomes discouraged. She wishes that she would die. May she entertain such a wish? May people ever wish to die? Under what circumstances?
5. Henry and George are walking along the street when they suddenly meet a gang of rough boys. The boys stop them and ask them whether they are Catholics. Must the two tell them? What is the reason for your answer?
6. Sue and Jane go to the fortune teller "just for fun!" The fortune teller tells Sue something which really comes to pass shortly afterwards. Sue asks you what you think about it. What would you tell her?
7. Jack never went to any other but a good Catholic school. He seemed to be a good boy, but shortly after he went to work he lost his faith. What, do you think, might have been the cause?
8. Someone sends you a prayer chain and tells you that you will be visited by some terrible calamity if you do not say it and help to circulate it. What should you do about it? What sin do you commit by believing in such

things? Mention other superstitions you know about.

9. You have a rosary that was blessed by the Holy Father. It is valued at 50 cents, but a friend offers you \$5 on account of the blessing it bears. May you accept the money for the rosary? May you accept any money? May you give it to your friend as a gift?

10. Louis wears a four-leaved clover for good luck. You laugh at him, but he says you are just as bad, for you wear a medal and believe it is going to keep away all harm. How will you explain the difference.

11. A thief steals some money from church. Later he repents. In confessing his thefts, must he make any distinction between what he took from church and what he stole elsewhere? Suppose the money he took from church amounted to very little? What do we call such a sin? What other sins are called sacrileges?



Answer Key

Answer for Word Search on Page 3:

H	D	C	O	M	M	A	N	D	M	E	N	T	G	S
S	F	D	G	S	T	Y	S	T	R	G	C	A	W	E
G	F	T	R	F	G	I	G	F	X	G	M	C	C	G
T	D	U	D	F	I	R	S	T	D	F	H	H	H	H
H	C	Y	G	G	J	T	L	K	G	U	H	F	I	J
B	H	R	G	N	H	U	C	Y	U	U	U	I	L	F
F	A	M	C	J	J	E	S	U	S	M	E	I	D	V
H	R	N	B	N	D	F	S	D	M	C	T	I	R	D
G	I	N	J	K	A	N	D	R	G	U	K	I	E	H
J	T	H	F	G	T	A	N	O	G	K	O	C	N	D
D	Y	C	D	B	N	M	G	L	O	V	E	M	G	G
Z	Y	H	Y	O	H	H	H	G	D	T	H	G	M	G
C	T	E	J	U	T	M	H	F	F	G	S	F	H	F
B	N	D	V	T	R	U	L	Y	D	D	F	F	S	Y
S	T	D	V	S	Y	W	E	H	S	D	V	D	S	F

Answer for Crossword Puzzle on Page 10:

Across:

1. servant 2. vision 3. hearts 4. ground 5. Rose

Down:

1. second 2. hermit 3. thinking 4. flower 5. love

Bibliography

Stories: 'The Little Servant Maid', 'St. Benedict Joseph Labre's Instruction on How to Love God', 'A Favoured Child of Jesus', 'A Beautiful Flower Destroyed', 'The Pilgrim's Desire Fulfilled' and 'The Three Young Maidens' taken from: *The Catechism in Examples* by Rev. D. Chisholm. Imprimatur 1908.

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