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LENTEN SACRIFICE

by Father Vaughn

One of the Sisters who taught in St. Alphonsus Grade School in New Orleans many years ago told me the following incident:

One of her most outstanding pupils, who had always been known for his promptness in attending school, came late one morning. The sister said to him "Jerry, what happened? Why are you late?" Jerry replied, "Well, you see, Sister, it rained last night, right? Well, there was so much water in the school yard that it took me a long time to get here." He concluded his explanation by saying, "I gave up stepping in puddles for Lent."

I don't doubt that hardly any of our readers would find giving up stepping in puddles of water to be much of a sacrifice. Evidently, however, for this young lad stepping in puddles was one of his greatest delights. For him, it was a sacrifice.

Sacrifice is something very personal. Sacrifice is really the chief method we humans use to express love. You can see this in your own married life. You express your love for your husband, or your wife, by making sacrifices that would please the one whom you love. One married couple's method of expressing love through sacrifice differs from another's

This letter is being written to you to urge you to express your love for God during Lent by voluntary sacrifice.

As you know, the Bishops of the United States have changed the laws of fasting and abstinence during Lent. It is important, therefore, that all of us strive to make some type of voluntary sacrifice. I offer to you just a few suggestions as to some possible sacrifices that you might make during this penitential season.

I have divided the list into suggested sacrifices for the father of the family, the mother and the children. I recommend, however, that you read the entire list. Its purpose is to stimulate your thinking. Things recommended for the father might stimulate an idea in the mother or children etc.

Try to do only a few things. Especially choose sacrifices that you feel will improve your character and your contact with God.

SUGGESTED SACRIFICES FOR FATHERS

1. Attend one extra Mass each week.
2. Be patient when you are tired and discouraged. Offer it for the graces you need to rear your family well.
3. Be careful that in word and example you are the man you hope your sons will be some day.
4. Spend some of your time helping your children with their school lessons, or just play with them.
5. Be generous in helping others at your place of business.
6. Give good example to your children by demonstrating to them that you are a man of prayer.
7. Make a visit to Church on the way to work.
8. Each day find some little word of praise for your wife.
9. Get the entire family together daily for the family rosary or some other family prayers.
10. Read Catholic newspapers, magazines and books.
11. Join the Holy Name Society, the St. Vincent DePaul Society, C. C. D., or some other apostolic activity in your parish.
12. Be cautious in speech - do not say anything that will hurt anyone.
13. Find the Church nearest to your work - make a daily visit during your noon hour, and encourage others to do so.
14. Offer to drive a neighbor to Church.
15. As a sacrifice for souls, smoke one cigarette less each day - better still, give them up altogether.
16. In your dealings with others, try to be a little more courteous.
17. Say grace silently before and after meals at work.
18. Say grace aloud before and after meals at home.
19. Daily read some selections from the Bible to your children.
20. Perform some special act of kindness each day toward your wife.
21. Discreetly bring God into your daily conversation with others.
22. If possible, be kind to an elderly neighbor by taking him or her to the grocery, etc.
23. As a sacrifice for souls, give up a favorite television program.
24. Perform one particularly kind act to some person whom you dislike.

SUGGESTED SACRIFICES FOR MOTHERS

1. Be cheerful when you are tired. Offer it up for your children.
2. Offer up the daily housework for missionaries in other lands.
3. Say a kind word about someone who is the subject of gossip.
4. Do an act of charity for some neighbor.
5. Encourage the family rosary in your home.
6. Go out of your way to do or say something to show your husband he is appreciated.
7. Attend Mass as often as possible during the week.
8. Make special efforts to get yourself and your children to Mass on time.
9. When exhausted after a full day's work, offer it up in union with Christ's sufferings, rather than complain.
10. Each day make a special effort to praise someone for something.
11. Let the children help when you would rather do something alone.
12. Read Catholic newspapers, magazines and books.
13. See that the children say their morning and night prayers.
14. Don't gossip about your neighbor; your children need good example.
15. One day a week give up your favorite television program; offer this sacrifice that some sinner give up sinning.
16. Cook your husband's favorite dinner even if you do not like it.
17. Give up some certain type of food particularly if it is fattening.
18. Go on a diet - offer up the sacrifice as a sign of your love for God.
19. Say one Hail Mary each hour.
20. Offer a distasteful household task for the conversion of sinners.
21. Hold back that impatient word - shift your thoughts to something pleasant.
22. Say a kind word to someone who annoys or bothers you.
23. When you're tired and busy, try to keep calm in your family dealings.
24. Remember God's presence while doing your duties.
25. Encourage grace before and after meals in your family.
26. Participate in Church affairs - especially apostolic works.

27. Resolve to teach your children more about God.
28. Pray for religious vocations.
29. Make a visit to the Blessed Sacrament daily.
30. Do a kindness for or visit a sick or elderly neighbor.
31. While doing your housework, say a few ejaculations i. e., "Dear Jesus, I love You," -- "Mary, my mother, help me," -- "Dear Jesus, have mercy on me."
32. Try not to speak critically of others. Think kind thoughts about them.
33. Each day spend five minutes thinking of the nice things that have happened to you. Thank the Lord for each of them.

SUGGESTED SACRIFICES FOR CHILDREN

1. Do some job at home without complaining, such as carrying out the trash, baby sitting, doing dishes, etc. Offer to do these chores rather than wait to be asked.
2. Do not complain when you feel like it. Offer it for people who will die today.
3. Spend 10 extra minutes on your homework. Offer it up for your teacher and classmates.
4. Make a visit to Church and pray for missionaries.
5. Take a smaller share when you divide candy or coke. Offer it up for the conversion of Russia.
6. Change the subject when someone is being talked about in an unkind way. Offer it up for your sins.
7. Answer promptly when your parents call you.
8. Let another member of the family have his way as regards viewing television programs or something else they might want.
9. Keep good order in your room at home and in school.
10. Make an extra visit to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.
11. Join in the family rosary; or at least get your brother or sister to say the rosary with you.
12. When Mother or Dad scolds, resolve not to answer back.
13. As soon as you return from school ask Mother if there is anything you can do to help her, and especially over the weekend.
14. Resolve to do one good deed each day.
15. Always be on the lookout for ways to help someone.
16. Choose a boy or girl who seems to have no friends and try especially to befriend him or her.

17. Attend an extra Mass on Saturday, especially on the first Saturday.
18. Try to remind five other boys or girls about Mass and Holy Communion on first Saturdays.
19. Bless each hour by saying a Hail Mary when the clock strikes.
20. As a little sacrifice for souls, kneel up straight in Church.
21. Be on time for Mass on Sundays and on weekdays.
22. Try to be more fervent at Mass and Holy Communion - remember Whom you are about to receive as you approach the Communion rail.
23. Say your Grace before and after meals - encourage your brothers and sisters to do so also.
24. Make the sign of the cross as you pass in front of Church.
25. Say your morning and night prayers, kneeling beside your bed - encourage your brothers and sisters to do so also.
26. Say extra ejaculations for the souls who are dying today.
27. Visit a sick or elderly neighbor, and offer to do some kindness for them.
28. Offer up not viewing your favorite television program, asking God to help someone get to heaven.

That this Lent will be your means of making you a better Christian and will be a time in which you achieve a closer union with God is our Lenten wish for you.

BITS OF INFORMATION FROM



HERE AND THERE

Father Vaughn will be glad to visit your relatives and friends who may be hospitalized in the New Orleans area. Should you have someone whom you wish him to call on, please phone 895-6176. Keep the stamps coming. We have received quite a lot of them, but are still far from having enough for the addressing machine which we urgently need at the Seelos Center. We have quite a variety of stamps on hand now. Should you wish stamps other than S & H Green Stamps, if you will send us the green stamps, we will be glad to send you the ones you wish.