

Jesus † Mary † Joseph
Chapter 26 - Beginning a New Life

Christ:

My child, do not lose the hope of making spiritual progress. You still have time. Your chance is not over yet. Why put off your good intentions until tomorrow? Now is the time for action! Begin this very moment! Here is your opportunity to make a new start. Begin your new life with the help of My grace.

2. Always keep a steady hope of achieving success. Do not let your failures discourage you. Beware also of over-confidence, so that you may not become a victim of pride or laziness.

3. Whenever you have to omit your prayers or some daily spiritual exercise because of some urgent duty or for the sake of your neighbor, try to make up later what was omitted. Do not be too ready to omit spiritual exercises because of weariness. This can easily become a habit which will hurt you.

Think:

It is easy enough to start again. All I have to do is: (1) to examine my life, (2) face what needs to be done, (3) pray for strength, and (4) start doing it. I may fail on this occasion or that, but the main thing is that I have begun and am determined to go on trying in spite of any failures which may occur.

Pray:

Lord, now I begin! Help me to live as You desire. If it is Your Will, I can do it. Let me not be a coward and run away from Your Will. You know what is right and best. I must begin now. Lord, help me. I do not expect to become a different person overnight. Just as my faults developed slowly over a period, so too will the opposite virtues grow within me. I will not be discouraged when my old faults catch me by surprise. My love for You will be proved by action, that is, by a steady, patient effort to get rid of my faults and to practice the opposite virtue. Now I begin! Amen.

November 25th

Saint Catherine of Alexandria, Virgin, Martyr, Patroness of Students and Young Girls
(†Fourth Century)

Catherine was a noble virgin of Alexandria, born in the fourth century. Before her Baptism, she saw in a dream the Blessed Virgin asking Her Son to receive her among His servants, but the Divine Infant turned away, saying she was not yet regenerated by the waters of Baptism. She made haste to receive that sacrament, and afterwards, when the dream was repeated, Catherine saw that the Saviour received her with great affection, and espoused her before the court of heaven, with a fine ring. She woke with it on her finger.

She had a very active intelligence, fit for all matters, and she undertook the study of philosophy and theology. At that time there were schools in Alexandria for the instruction of Christians, where excellent Christian scholars taught. She made great progress and became able to sustain the truths of our religion against even very subtle sophists. At that

time Maximinus II was sharing the empire with Constantine the Great and Licinius, and had as his district Egypt; and this cruel Christian-hater ordinarily resided in Alexandria, capital of the province. He announced a gigantic pagan sacrifice, such that the very air would be darkened with the smoke of the bulls and sheep immolated on the altars of the gods. Catherine before this event strove to strengthen the Christians against the fatal lures, repeating that the oracles vaunted by the infidels were pure illusion, originating in the depths of the lower regions.

She foresaw that soon it would be the Christians' turn to be immolated, when they refused to participate in the ceremonies. She therefore went to the emperor himself, asking to speak with him, and her singular beauty and majestic air won an audience for her. She said to him that it was a strange thing that he should by his example attract so many peoples to such an abominable cult. By his high office he was obliged to turn them away from it, since reason itself shows us that there can be only one sovereign Being, the first principle of all else. She begged him to cease so great a disorder by giving the true God the honor due Him, lest he reap the wages of his indifference in this life already, as well as in the next. The consequences of her hardy act extended over a certain time; he decided to call in fifty sophists of his suite, to bring back this virgin from her errors. A large audience assembled to hear the debate; the emperor sat on his throne with his entire court, dissimulating his rage.

Catherine began by saying she was surprised that he obliged her to face, alone, fifty individuals, but she asked the grace of him, that if the true God she adored rendered her victorious, he would adopt her religion and renounce the cult of the demons. He was not pleased and replied that it was not for her to lay down conditions for the discussion. The head of the sophists began the orations and reprimanded her for opposing the authority of poets, orators and philosophers, who unanimously had revered Jupiter, Juno, Neptune, Minerva and others. He cited their writings, and said she should consider that these persons were far anterior to this new religion she was following. She listened carefully before answering, then spoke, showing that the ridiculous fables which Homer, Orpheus and other poets had invented concerning their divinities, and the fact that many offered a cult to them, as well as the abominable crimes attributed to them, proved them to be gods only in the opinion of the untutored and credulous. And then she proved that the prophecies of the Hebrew Scriptures had clearly announced the time and the circumstances of the life of the future Saviour, and that these were now fulfilled. Prodigy; the head of the sophists avowed that she was entirely correct and renounced his errors; the others said they could not oppose their chief. Maximinus had them put to death by fire, but the fire did not consume their remains. Thus they died as Christians, receiving the Baptism of blood.

The story of Saint Catherine continues during the time of the emperor's efforts to persuade her to marry him; he put to death his converted wife and the captain of his guards who had received Baptism with two hundred of his soldiers. He delivered Catherine up to prison and then to tortures as a result of her firmness in refusing his overtures. The famous wheel of Saint Catherine — in reality several interacting wheels — which he invented to

torment her, was furnished with sharp razor blades and sharp points of iron; all who saw it trembled. But as soon as it was set in movement it was miraculously disjoined and broken into pieces, and these pieces flew in all directions and wounded the spectators. The barbaric emperor finally commanded that she be decapitated; and she offered her neck to the executioner, after praying that her mortal remains would be respected.

The story of Saint Catherine continues with the discovery of the intact body of a young and beautiful girl on Mount Sinai in the ninth century, that is, four centuries later. The Church, in the Collect of her feast day, bears witness to the transport of her body. A number of proofs testified to the identity of her mortal remains found in the region of the famous monastery existing on that mountain since the fifth century. Her head is today conserved in Rome.

Source: Les Petits Bollandistes: Vies des Saints, by Msgr. Paul Guérin (Bloud et Barral: Paris, 1882), Vol. 13.

Daily Thoughts and Prayers For Our Beloved Dead Twenty-Fifth Day

One of the saddest facts of life is that the living so soon forget the dead. We forget when we live: we are forgotten when we die.

St. Monica, on her deathbed, pleaded with her son, St. Augustine: “Lay my body anywhere, only this I beg of you: remember me at the Altar of God.”

Prayer: Our Father. 3 Hail Marys. Glory Be. De Profundis.

Most merciful Jesus, lover of Souls, we pray Thee, by the agony of Thy most Sacred Heart, and by the sorrows of Thy Immaculate Mother, wash with Thy Blood the Souls in Purgatory. Deliver them from their pains, that they may join the Heavenly Chorus in praising Thee and interceding for us at the hour of need.

De Profundis (Psalm 129)

- 1 Out of the depths I have cried to Thee, O Lord:
- 2 Lord, hear my voice. Let Thy ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.
- 3 If Thou, O Lord, wilt mark iniquities: Lord, who shall stand it.
- 4 For with Thee there is merciful forgiveness: and by reason of Thy law, I have waited for Thee, O Lord. My soul hath relied on His Word:
- 5 My soul hath hoped in the Lord.
- 6 From the morning watch even until night, let Israel hope in the Lord.
- 7 Because with the Lord there is mercy: and with Him plentiful redemption.
- 8 And He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

Source: Douay Rheims Bible, Imp. 1899

Ejaculation: Holy Mary our Deliverer, pray for us and for the Souls in Purgatory. (100 days)

Jesus † Mary † Joseph

Thank you for visiting: <http://www.JMJsites.com>. Fight TRUTH decay by reading what is on this website and please tell others about this website.

