

Jesus † Mary † Joseph
Chapter 33 - Necessary Care of Oneself
Christ:

My child, everyone must take a reasonable care of himself. In time of temptation arouse yourself, warn yourself, guard yourself and avoid idleness. No matter how much you do for others, do not neglect yourself altogether. Beware of too much talking. Whenever possible, try to be alone with Me. Take advantage of My presence. Every moment of your life is lived in My presence. You possess Him Whom the whole world cannot take from you. I am worth more than everything else put together.

2. If you neglect yourself, you can lose in a short time the spiritual strength which was acquired slowly and with great effort over a long period. Reflect often on the eternal purpose of your earthly life. You have to be a spiritual man to reach this goal. I tell you through My Church how to live this earthly life. There is no other way. Examine your progress each day. In a short time your present life will be over. If you have been faithful, you will never again know fear nor sorrow. For the little labor which you do on earth, you will gain a glorious reward and unending joy. I shall not fail those who have been faithful to My Will.

3. The man who has learned to pray and reflect, looks on self-perfection as his first and highest business. One who studies himself honestly finds it easy to be silent about others. Learn to hold your tongue about the affairs of others unless your duty obliges you to speak. Fix your attention on your own faults and do something about them. If you are a true man of God, the doings of others will not make you worse than you are. If you can remedy a bad situation, do so. Many times, however, you can do nothing but pray over the misdeeds of others. Do this as one sinner praying for another, not as a superior being praying for inferiors. When you have learned to fix your attention on your own affairs, you will find great peace of soul.

Think:

As far as I can, I should strive to help others. In many things however, I can help only by prayer, good example, and silence. Prayer gives grace to me and others. Good example reminds others of what they should be doing. Silence prevents the spreading of scandal and the flaring of tempers. Minding one's own business is a great virtue. My first task is to save my soul. As far as I can, I must also try to help others live a holier and happier life. Many things, however, are not in my power. After I have done what I can to help matters, I should leave them in God's Hands.

Pray:

Lord, give me the courage to look at myself, the honesty to admit my faults and limitations, the sincerity to try self-improvement, and the love for You that will keep me at it for the rest of my life. Let me not be concerned about matters that are beyond my control, except to petition Your help. For the rest, let me really live the words: "Thy Will be done." Amen.

December 2nd - Saint Bibiana, Virgin and Martyr (†363)

Saint Bibiana was a native of Rome, born in the fourth century, the daughter and sister of martyrs. Flavian, her Christian father, was apprehended during the reign of Julian the Apostate, branded on the face as a slave, and banished to Tuscany, where he died of his wounds a few days later. Her mother, Dafrosa, was beheaded two weeks later. Their two daughters, Bibiana and Demetria, after the death of their parents were stripped of all they had in the world, and then imprisoned with orders to give them no food. The Roman praetorian offered them rewards if they would abandon their faith, and threatened a cruel death if they would not conform, but they replied courageously that the goods and advantages of this world had no attraction for them, and that they would endure a thousand deaths rather than betray their faith and their Saviour. Demetria, after having pronounced this ardent defense, fell to the ground and expired at her sister's side; she is inscribed in the Roman martyrology on June 21st.

The officer gave orders that Bibiana be placed in the custody of a woman named Rufina, who was commanded to corrupt her or mistreat her. But the martyr made prayer her shield and remained invincible. Enraged at the courage and perseverance of the young virgin, the persecutor ordered her to be tied to a pillar and whipped until she expired, with scourges tipped with leaden plummets. The Saint underwent this punishment cheerfully, and died at the hands of the executioners. She was buried by a holy priest at a site where afterwards a chapel and then a church were built above her tomb. In 1628 the church was splendidly rebuilt by Pope Urban VIII, and in it he placed the relics of the two sisters and of Saint Dafrosa, their mother.

Sources: Little Pictorial Lives of the Saints, a compilation based on Butler's Lives of the Saints and other sources, by John Gilmary Shea (Benziger Brothers: New York, 1894); Les Petits Bollandistes: Vies des Saints, by Msgr. Paul Guérin (Bloud et Barral: Paris, 1882), Vol. 14.

Preparing the Stable - December 2nd – The Roof

See that the roof of the stable is in good condition, so that the Infant Jesus is protected from rain and snow. This you will do by carefully avoiding every uncharitable remark.

Ejaculation: Jesus, teach me to love my neighbor as myself.

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