

Prayers for the Holy Souls in Purgatory

31 days of prayers for the Holy Souls

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FIRST DAY.

PRAYERS FOR THE HOLY SOULS.

One of the most consoling doctrines of the Catholic Church is that of the Communion of Saints. All men - the saints in Heaven, we upon earth, the souls in Purgatory — are members of one great family. By this "bond of perfection" which unites the Suffering and Triumphant Church with the Militant Church upon earth, incorporating them into one body, mutual charity becomes an obligation. This reciprocal love, being the duty of all men, renders it imperative that all should pray for one another, for in this general prayer, offered mutually, Christian charity is most beautifully and eloquently expressed.

From this general obligation we derive the special duty to pray for the suffering souls in Purgatory, who are unable in their extreme distress to do aught for their own relief. It has always been the belief of holy Church, that the faithful, united in the Communion of Saints, can mutually assist each other. As the saints in Heaven pray for us, so must we also offer our petitions for the suffering souls in Purgatory, that God in His goodness and mercy, may mitigate and shorten their punishment, and hasten their entrance into Heaven. It is the doctrine of the Church that the faithful upon earth are really able to relieve the temporal punishment of the holy souls in Purgatory. "In this," says the Roman Catechism, "the supreme mercy and goodness of God deserve our grateful acknowledgment and praise, that He has granted to our frailty the privilege that one may satisfy for another."

Prayer: O Lord, Jesus Christ, Thou Who hast said, "Where there are two or three gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them," (Matth. xviii. 20) look mercifully upon Thy holy Church, who implores Thy clemency in behalf of her suffering members. End their intense pain, and open unto them the portals of the heavenly Jerusalem, that they may praise and bless Thee forever and ever. Amen.

Special Intercession: Pray for those who, during the course of their earthly lives, did most to relieve the souls in Purgatory.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them; may they rest in peace.
Amen.

(300 days' indulgence each time. Say three times.) (No. 536)

Practice: Attend the public devotion for the suffering souls.

Invocation: My Jesus, mercy!

*(300 days' indulgence every time for the souls in Purgatory.) (No. 55)

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SECOND DAY.

COMMEMORATION OF "ALL SOULS."

The commemoration of "All Souls" was instituted by the Church as a day of special prayer for all the faithful departed who are as yet deprived of the blissful contemplation of God, and the possession of Heaven. These holy souls endure most agonizing torments, and count the lingering moments of time, while awaiting release from prison, or, at least some relief in their intense pain. They have special confidence in their friends and relatives upon earth, hoping to be lovingly cherished in their memory, and aided by their fervent prayers. With holy Job they cry out: "Have pity on me, have pity on me, at least you, my friends, because the hand of the Lord hath touched me." (Job xix. 21.)

The anniversary of All Souls should serve to revive and confirm our devotion in behalf of the suffering souls in Purgatory, and induce us to make ample amends for our neglect of this duty during the year. "A gift hath grace in the sight of all the living, and restrain not grace from the dead." (Eccl. vii. 37.)

Prayer: O God, Creator and Redeemer of all the faithful, grant to the souls of Thy servants pardon of all their sins, that by pious supplications they may graciously obtain the remission they have always desired. Who livest and reignest world without end. Amen.

Special Intercession: Pray for the souls of those who suffer the greatest torments.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them; may they rest in peace. Amen.

(Three times)

Practice: Examine how often, and in what manner you have practiced prayer for the souls in Purgatory during the year

Invocation: My Jesus, mercy!

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THIRD DAY.

THE DOCTRINE OF PURGATORY.

The destiny awaiting us at death is not the same for all men: "He will render to every man according to his works" (Math. xvi. 27.) Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory are the three places into which the souls of the departed are received. Heaven is the happy destination of perfectly pure and holy souls only; Hell the final doom of the reprobate; Purgatory, temporarily for the just, who are not as yet entirely purified. There God completes the punishment due to their faults, which were not sufficiently atoned for on earth; there He submits these holy souls to the last purgation, to cleanse them from the least stain, and, by fire, to bring them to that degree of perfected purity, which is necessary for them before being admitted to eternal bliss.

Hence there are two classes of souls in Purgatory:

1. Those who depart this life, stained by venial sins and imperfections.
2. Those who have repented sincerely of their mortal sins and confessed them, if possible, without having done sufficient penance for them. Judging from our lives, experience teaches us that most men deserve Purgatory for both causes.

Prayer: Graciously hear, O God, the fervent prayers we offer Thee for the suffering souls in Purgatory, who, not having satisfied Thy divine justice, confide in Thine infinite mercy and our intercessions. Extend unto them Thy consolations, and redeem them, through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Special Intercession: Pray for the souls of those who suffer in Purgatory for little faults.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them; may they rest in peace. Amen.

(Three times)

Practice: Be conscientious and faithful in the performance of little duties, and offer the inconvenience for the suffering souls.

Invocation: My Jesus, mercy!

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FOURTH DAY.

EXPIATION FOR VENIAL SINS AND IMPERFECTIONS.

The judgments of God are very different from the judgments of men. "For: "My thoughts are not your thoughts; nor your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are exalted above the earth, so are My ways exalted above your ways, and My thoughts above your thoughts." (Is. Iv. 8-9.) Though the judgments of God are severe, they are ever just. "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him much shall be required" (Luke xii. 48.) And St. Gregory the Great says: "Where grace has been augmented, there also the account has been increased." From those souls, upon whom God has bestowed great and special graces, He demands a more faithful cooperation, and the least infidelity to such grace is punished with extreme severity; the purgation or cleansing of these favored souls must be perfect in proportion to the high degree of glory to which they are to be exalted. In reference to prayer for the suffering souls, who are in Purgatory for venial sins and imperfections, we must observe that, though their time of suffering is comparatively short, and their punishment less vigorous, their pain and agony is more intense, owing to their yearning desire of perfect union with God. They are in utmost need of our fervent prayers, and will show their gratitude by their petitions for us before the throne of God, according to the speedy assistance we have given them during our earthly lives.

Prayer: Inflame within us, O Lord, the fire of Thy Divine love, that all our inordinate desires may be consumed here upon earth, thus rendering our prayers for the suffering souls in Purgatory more acceptable to Thee and beneficial to them. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Special Intercession: Pray for the souls who are nearest their deliverance.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them; may they rest in peace. Amen.

(Three times)

Practice: Mortify your prevailing weakness or inclination.

Invocation: My Jesus, mercy!

FIFTH DAY.

THE SUFFERINGS OF PURGATORY.

The sufferings of Purgatory are twofold: the pain of loss, and the torture of the senses; both in proportion to temporal punishment unremitted. Having committed sin, the soul has turned away from God, thus increasing the pain of loss, or, according to our ideas, God departs from that soul and deprives her of His beatific vision. By sin, the soul has been attached to creatures, making improper use of them, displeasing to God, hence the severe punishment, consisting in the pain of the senses. God permits that those who have abandoned their Creator, and bestowed their affections upon creatures, are chastised by the same, for we read in the Book of Wisdom: "By what things a man sinneth, by the same also is he tormented." (Wis. xi. 17.)

God has not revealed, nor has the Church ever taught in what manner or to what extent the souls in Purgatory suffer, but it is the opinion of the holy Fathers and Doctors of the Church that, what St. Paul writes to the Corinthians, (i, iii. 15) "But he himself shall be saved: yet so as by fire," must be taken in a literal sense, which is accepted also by St. Thomas Aquinas.

Prayer: O Lord, by Thine infinite love and clemency, graciously grant to the suffering souls in Purgatory remittance of their punishment. Receive them into Thy eternal glory, that blessed by Thy beatific vision, they may praise and adore Thee for ever and ever. Amen.

Special Intercession: Pray for the souls of those who have suffered for the longest time in Purgatory.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them; may they rest in peace. Amen.
(Three times)

Practice: Do not let human respect prevent you from performing a duty.

Invocation: My Jesus, mercy!

SIXTH DAY.

THE PAIN OF LOSS.

The spiritual suffering, or the pain of loss, is the greatest pain of Purgatory, according, to the Fathers of the Church. No one can comprehend the great suffering of a soul departed, which, in all its ardent desire for the highest and only good, sees itself ever repulsed as an object of God's avenging justice.

St. Alphonsus writes: "Far greater than the pain of sense in Purgatory is that pain which the holy souls must endure in being deprived of the vision of God. Because these souls are inflamed, not only with a natural, but with a supernatural love of God, they are so vehemently attracted to the union with their highest good, that, in being repulsed through their own fault, they experience so violent a pain as would kill them instantly if death were possible to them." Therefore, says St. Chrysostom, "this pain of being deprived of God is a far greater pain for them than the pain of the senses. The fire of hell increased a thousand times would not cause them such great suffering as does this pain of the loss of God."

Prayer: O God, Father of mercies, grant the ardent desire of the souls in Purgatory who yearn to behold Thee. Send down to them Thy holy angel with the joyful tidings that the moment of their redemption has come, that their exile is ended, and bless them by the perfect union with Thee forever. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Special Intercession: Pray for the souls who are punished for their forgetfulness of the holy Presence of God during their lives.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them; may they rest in peace. Amen.

(Three times)

Practice: Try to remember at all times the holy Presence of God.

Invocation: My Jesus, mercy!

SEVENTH DAY.

PAIN OF SORROW FOR SIN.

The soul departed, before the judgment-seat of God, is enlightened with a perfect knowledge of the purity and sanctity of her Divine Judge, clearly perceiving the stains with which she is sullied, and her extreme unworthiness of union with God. The thought: I have offended God, Who is everlasting beauty and perfection; I am not yet worthy to appear before the face of the Lord, Who is infinitely holy, not worthy to take possession of my dwelling-place in Heaven, is the greatest sorrow of the suffering soul. Much more clearly than during their earthly lives do these holy souls comprehend the perfections of God, and love Him above all things; therefore the thought of having offended Him is a piercing sorrow which surpasses all their other sufferings.

St. Ambrose tells us, there is no greater agony than remorse of conscience caused by sin. There are examples on record, of men who died from the effects of this vehement sorrow, Yet, how much more intense must be the contrition of the suffering souls, who fully understand the great malice of sin! We know by our own experience that the depth of sorrow for having offended a person is equal to the love we bear him. The holy souls in Purgatory, being inflamed with a perfect love of God, their perfect contrition for sin is their greatest sorrow.

Prayer: O God, Father of grace and mercy ! graciously regard the deep sorrow of the suffering souls in Purgatory. Deign to accept their love, and grant them remission of their punishment, that, united with Thee, they may praise Thy goodness forever. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Special Intercession: Pray for the souls who, while on earth, loved God most ardently.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them; may they rest in peace. Amen.

(Three times)

Practice: Try to make an act of perfect contrition for your sins.

Invocation: My Jesus, mercy!

EIGHTH DAY.

PAIN OF HELPLESSNESS AND DESOLATION.

The souls in Purgatory have entered into the realm of Divine Justice. The penance and satisfaction due for their faults must be made, either by the pain of Purgatory itself, or by the suffrages of the faithful, consisting in prayer, good works, and the spiritual treasure of indulgences bestowed upon them; for the suffering souls can no longer merit, and are entirely unable to assist themselves. A sick man and a beggar have a tongue to ask for help, and the very sight of their misery will move others to compassion. The suffering souls, however, have no resource but that of patience, resignation, and hope. To all their moans there is but one answer, "the night hath come, in which no man can work."

Hence in their extreme desolation and distress, they incessantly cry out to us for relief and assistance; but since they cannot do this in a manner perceptible to us, holy Church does it for them, by instituting many touching devotions in their behalf. Can we, then, be cold and heartless towards these souls? — "A hard heart will fare evil at the last." Be not then indifferent to your own interests.

Prayer: Have mercy, O Lord, upon the suffering souls in Purgatory, in their helplessness and desolation. Comfort them by the prayers and petitions of the angels and the just in Heaven and upon earth; shorten the time of their suffering, and reward them with joys eternal. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Special Intercession: Pray for the most forsaken and helpless souls.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them; may they rest in peace. Amen.

(Three times)

Practice: Deny yourself a little comfort, or some special consolation, and offer it for the most forsaken souls in Purgatory.

Invocation: My Jesus, mercy!

NINTH DAY.

PAIN OF FIRE IN PURGATORY.

The Church has given no decision regarding the word "fire" in relation to Purgatory; but according to Theologians and Doctors of the Church, we are to understand a material fire. Concerning this, Bishop Colmar of Mayence, a great friend of the holy souls, writes: "Besides being deprived of the vision of God, the souls in Purgatory must also endure the tortures of a fire, the effects of which are so much more painful, as it is an instrument in the avenging hand of God; a fire, as St. Augustine says, in comparison to which our material fire is as nothing; a fire that entirely penetrates the soul, in whatever manner this may be accomplished."

How, and to what extent this is done, we know not, but may draw our conclusion from similar instances.— "In like manner," says St. Gregory the Great, "as the fallen angels, although pure spirits, are tormented by the material fire of hell, so may a similar fire torture the souls of the departed in Purgatory." The justice of God can punish a spirit by means of a material substance, as well as He can, in His omnipotence, give life to a body by the agency of a spirit. According to the holy Fathers, the fire of Purgatory does not differ from the fire of hell, excepting in point of duration. "It is the same fire" says St. Thomas, "that torments the reprobate in hell, and the just in Purgatory. The least pain in Purgatory" he adds, "surpasses the greatest sufferings of this life" Nothing but eternal duration makes the fire of hell more terrible than that of Purgatory.

Prayer: Refresh, O Lord, the suffering souls in Purgatory, with the dew of Thy grace, that their pains may be relieved, and, in Thy mercy, hasten the moment of their deliverance, that they may meet Thee in Heaven, where no fire but that of Thy holy love shall, consume them. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Special Intercession: Pray for all the souls in Purgatory, particularly for those who are forgotten by their relatives.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them; may they rest in peace. Amen.

(Three times)

Practice: Endeavor to spread the devotion for the holy souls in Purgatory as much as possible.

Invocation: My Jesus, mercy!

TENTH DAY.

THE DURATION OF PURGATORY.

Concerning the duration of Purgatory, the Church simply tells us that it is not a place of eternal pain, but will end at the last judgment; neither are we informed of the length of time required for the purification of a soul. According to St. Thomas Aquinas, the soul, to be reunited to her Creator in Heaven, must be in the state of primitive innocence which adorned her when she proceeded from His hand. The image of God must be entirely restored within her, commensurate to the degree of glory awaiting her in Heaven.

From this it is evident that the suffering souls cannot enter Heaven until perfectly cleansed, either by their pains or by the suffrages of the faithful. With the royal Prophet they cry out in plaintive voice: "As the hart panteth after the fountains of water, so my soul panteth after Thee, O God! When shall I come and appear before the face of God?" (Ps, xli. 2-3.) They suffer until entirely purified, until the last farthing of their debt is discharged. Increased and intensified pain will probably supply the want of time for the souls who shall not have rendered full satisfaction by the last day of universal judgment.

Prayer: O God, the Dispenser of pardon, and Friend of human salvation, we implore Thee, by the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and all Thy saints, grant to the souls of our brethren, relatives, benefactors, and all the faithful departed, the joys of eternal bliss. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Special Intercession: Pray for the souls who are most desirous of obtaining help from you.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them; may they rest in peace. Amen.

(Three times)

Practice: Mortify your curiosity.

Invocation: My Jesus, mercy!

ELEVENTH DAY.

OUR DUTY TO RELIEVE THE SOULS IN PURGATORY.

In bestowing charity upon any person, we are usually guided by the degree of his poverty; but, who is in such great need as he who possesses absolutely nothing, owes a heavy debt, is unable to labor or gain any merit, or even to beg, and must nevertheless suffer the most excruciating torments until the last farthing has been paid? There is a universal law to assist the needy, which extends even to strangers; but here the obligation is greatest, because among these souls in Purgatory, are such as were intimately connected with us, who suffer, perhaps, for having loved us excessively. Among the sufferers are our fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, relatives, and friends. How exceedingly painful for them to be forgotten and deserted even by those whose happiness they promoted during their sojourn upon earth; to see the possessions left to their children foolishly squandered, they themselves not receiving the benefit of the least farthing thereof! What proofs of extreme coldness and ingratitude! Were any of these persons afflicted with the least pain upon earth, we would do all in our power to relieve them, but, as it is, we are devoid of all sympathy, and leave them in their terrible suffering and anguish.

Prayer: Have mercy, O Lord, upon the suffering souls in Purgatory, and mitigate the severity of Thy judgment, that they, who, during their earthly lives believed in Thee, hoped in Thee, and loved Thee, may receive the crown of justice in Heaven. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Special Intercession: Pray for the souls of those who are suffering for their negligence in praying for the souls in Purgatory.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them; may they rest in peace. Amen.

(Three times)

Practice: Suffer patiently the disagreeable occurrences in your intercourse with others.

Invocation: My Jesus, mercy!

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TWELFTH DAY.

GRAND DISPLAY IS OF NO VALUE TO THE HOLY SOULS.

In regard to pompous displays for the departed, St. Augustine says: "Costly funerals and expensive displays may afford the living some consolation, but are of no benefit to the departed." He adds, however, "Let care be bestowed upon funerals and the erection of monuments; for Holy Writ reckons these among good works. Let all perform these last services for their departed, and thereby relieve their own sorrow; but let them show greater zeal, care, and generosity in succoring the souls of the departed by Masses, prayers, and alms, and thus give evidence not only of a temporal, but also a spiritual love for those who are departed in body only, but not in-spirit. According to a rule of the Church, flowers should be used at funerals of children only; circumstances may at times justify a deviation from this rule, but, at all events, it is unpardonable if the expense connected with this display deprives the soul departed of any spiritual assistance.

Prayer: We beseech Thee, O Lord, by Thy infinite mercy, do not despise our prayers in behalf of the souls in Purgatory, but grant them the peace and consolation we desire for them. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Special Intercession: Pray for the souls of those who were remembered by a pompous funeral only, and have no relief in their pain.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them; may they rest in peace. Amen.

(Three times)

Practice: Accompany the funeral of a poor person, at, the first opportunity.

Invocation: My Jesus, mercy!

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THIRTEENTH DAY.

THE SPECIAL DUTY OF EVERY ONE TO AID THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED.

Besides the general duty imposed upon us by the divine law of charity, there is a special obligation incumbent upon every one to assist particular souls. This duty devolves upon us in consequence of the personal relations with such souls during their earthly career; for, whatever be the condition of man in life, he will have among the souls, departed, who may be suffering in Purgatory, some to whom he is indebted for particular favors and benefits.

But what could more forcibly elicit our charity and gratitude than to behold our loved ones and our benefactors in extreme distress, while we have the means of alleviating their suffering! That person does not possess a spark of Christian charity, who, from neglect or indolence, suffers the souls of his friends to be tormented in the flames of Purgatory.

Prayer: Revive, O Lord, within the hearts of Thy faithful, an active commiseration for the brethren gone before us, that they may not, by our indifference or neglect, suffer without relief and assistance. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Special Intercession: Pray for the souls of those who are neglected by their relatives and friends.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them; may they rest in peace. Amen.

(Three times)

Practice: Bestow alms for the relief of the suffering souls.

Invocation: My Jesus, mercy!

FOURTEENTH DAY.

SPECIAL DUTY OF CHILDREN TOWARDS THEIR DECEASED PARENTS.

"Honor thy father, and forget not the groanings of thy mother. Remember that thou hadst not been born but through them, and make a return to them: as they have done for thee." (Eccl. vii. 29-30.) Next to God, our parents are our greatest benefactors, entitled to most tender love and gratitude, which is the sacred duty of every child. This duty does not end with this life; it is extended even to eternity. Should our departed parents find no relief in their pains? Must they cry out in bitter anguish: "I have reared sons and daughters, but they have forgotten me?"

If we compassionate the misery of strangers, if we do not heartlessly send a beggar from our doors, oh, let us remember how near and dear father and mother are to us, and how greatly we are indebted to them. After their death we owe them prayers, alms, good works, and Masses. They cry out to us for mercy. Would it not be the highest degree of ingratitude were we to forget those who bestowed their best love and care upon us in life? The commandment of God, "Honor thy father and thy mother," is an obligation also towards our deceased parents.

Prayer: O God, Who hast commanded us to honor father and mother, look in loving kindness upon the souls of my father and mother, and forgive them their trespasses, and grant unto me the joy of being reunited to them in the glorious light of everlasting life. Through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord. Amen.

Special Intercession: Pray for the souls of parents who have been forgotten by their children.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them; may they rest in peace. Amen.
(Three times)

Practice: Mortify yourself by an act of obedience.

Invocation: My Jesus, mercy!

FIFTEENTH DAY.

WE SHOULD BE IN THE STATE OF GRACE WHEN GAINING INDULGENCES FOR THE POOR SOULS.

Holy Church teaches us that the state of grace is necessary to perform works that are merit-bearing for ourselves, and many saints and holy teachers of the science of God apply this same teaching to works and prayers which have indulgences attached to them and are to be applied to the Poor Souls. It is certain that if confession and Holy Communion are demanded for gaining the particular indulgence, the indulgence is not gained unless the person who performs these works is in God's favor at the time. A person who may be, unfortunately, in the state of mortal sin, can have Masses said for the faithful departed. He himself will acquire no merit thereby, but the suffering souls will derive the full benefit of the Holy Sacrifice. As we should always strive to be in the friendship and grace of God, if we have any doubt about our condition or are certain that we have lost God's favor then before trying to gain an Indulgence let us confess our sins or at least strive to make an act of perfect contrition.

"He that abideth in Me," says Christ, "and I in him, the same beareth much fruit, for without Me you can do nothing." (John xv, 5) If, then, we are incapable of gaining merit for ourselves, how can we expect to benefit others? St. Francis Xavier says: "Before being intent upon delivering souls from Purgatory, take heed to redeem your own souls from hell;" and here we may add the word of the Lord spoken by His prophet: "Wash yourselves, be clean, take away the evil of your devices from my eyes: cease to do perversely". (Isaias i. 16.)

Prayer: Grant us the grace, O Lord! to avoid sin at all times, and confirm us in Thy charity, that, by Thy bounty, our supplications for the suffering souls may be acceptable to Thee, and beneficial to them. Through Christ, our Lord: Amen.

Special Intercession: Pray for the souls of those who were careful never to lose the grace of God.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them; may they rest in peace. Amen.

(Three times)

Practice: Make an act of perfect contrition.

Invocation: My Jesus, mercy!

SIXTEENTH DAY.

THE EFFICACY OF PRAYER FOR THE SUFFERING SOULS.

"It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead that they may be loosed from their sins" (2 Mach. xii.)

Prayer for the dead is holy, because pleasing to God; wholesome, because, through the merciful goodness of God it accomplishes its sublime and charitable object. Nothing is so pleasing to God as the sacrifice of love and mercy, especially when offered for the suffering souls, whom He loves most tenderly, because they are holy and sure of Heaven.

To relieve the suffering souls we can do scarcely anything more salutary than to gain indulgences applicable to them, offering to God the perfect satisfaction of Christ and the saints, and performing good works in their behalf, that they may be comforted or entirely delivered from the pains of Purgatory.

A suffering soul may receive an entire or a temporary remission of her penalty, in accordance with the indulgence applied, being either plenary or partial.

Prayer: Open, O Lord! the rich treasures of Thy holy Church, in favor of the souls in Purgatory that they may receive full pardon, or, at least some relief in their pains; and grant us grace to deliver and to comfort a great number of suffering souls by prayer and good works. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Special Intercession: Pray for the souls, who, during their earthly career, endeavored to gain many indulgences for the faithful departed.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them; may they rest in peace. Amen.

(Three times)

Practice: Apply all the indulgences you can gain to the souls in Purgatory.

Invocation: My Jesus, mercy!

SEVENTEENTH DAY.

THE MANNER IN WHICH THE CHURCH BESTOWS INDULGENCES UPON THE SOULS IN PURGATORY.

The Church does not apply indulgences to the souls in Purgatory, as she does to the faithful upon earth, by the tribunal of penance and absolution, but confers them simply by pious supplications and sacrifices offered in their behalf; thus they are relieved indirectly. The Holy Church opens her rich treasures of merit and satisfaction in proportion to the suffrages of the faithful, offering expiation and fervent prayers to God for the relief of the suffering souls, according to the value of the indulgences gained in their behalf.

God has reserved to Himself the right to accept entirely, or in part, the satisfaction offered for any soul in Purgatory. This acceptance depends upon His holy and adorable Will, and, perhaps, in great measure upon the care of the soul to render herself worthy of the Divine assistance during her earthly career. Besides, there may be some obligations neglected by the person who intends to gain the indulgence, owing to ignorance or forgetfulness on his part. Therefore, we have no assurance whatever that an indulgence given by us to the holy souls has had the desired effect.

Considering this, we should prepare most carefully, and fulfill all obligations required for gaining an indulgence. However, let us place, with entire confidence, the application of indulgences to departed souls especially dear to us, into the tender hand of Divine mercy.

Prayer: Have mercy, O Lord, upon the suffering souls in Purgatory, mitigate the severity of Thy judgments; let the infinite merits of Thine only-begotten Son, and those of Thy saints, assist the holy souls, and deliver them from their sufferings. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Special Intercession: Pray for the souls of those who neglected to gain indulgences for the souls in Purgatory.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them; may they rest in peace. Amen.

(Three times)

Practice: Offer all indulgences you may gain to-day, for the souls in Purgatory.

Invocation: My Jesus, mercy!

EIGHTEENTH DAY.

THE EFFICACY OF HOLY MASS FOR THE DEPARTED.

The Sacrifice of the Mass is the great devotion of the Catholic Church, and, of all means to assist the souls in Purgatory, none is more valuable or meritorious; for there Jesus Christ offers Himself and His infinite merits to His Heavenly Father, by the hands of the Priest, in behalf of the suffering souls. The unbloody Sacrifice of the Mass does not essentially differ from the sacrifice of the cross, but only accidentally as to the mode of oblation, and no limit can be placed to the effect of this great sacrifice, which contains in itself all graces.

From this inestimable efficacy, however, we may not infer that the offering of one Mass is sufficient to release the souls we love; for, though the Sacrifice on Calvary was infinite, we cannot conclude that the application of it, through the Mass, must also be infinite. St. Thomas Aquinas tells us, it was not the intention of Jesus Christ to bestow the full efficacy of His suffering and death, which is celebrated in every Mass, upon us; His merits are applied according to His Adorable Will, for the ways of God are often inscrutable.

It is very salutary, therefore, to have the Holy Sacrifice offered frequently for the repose of a soul. Should the souls who are dear to us, for whom we intercede in this manner, be already in the enjoyment of eternal will bestow the merit of the Masses offered on other suffering souls.

Prayer: O Lord, Jesus Christ: Who didst institute the unbloody Sacrifice of the Mass in commemoration of Thy Sacrifice upon the cross, we beseech Thee, bestow the merits of this Holy Sacrifice upon the souls in Purgatory, that they may soon be released from their pains. Who livest and reignest, world without end. Amen.

Special Intercession: Pray for the souls of those who were most zealous to assist at Mass.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them; may they rest in peace. Amen.

(Three times)

Practice: Assist at Mass for the relief of the suffering souls.

Invocation: My Jesus, mercy!

NINETEENTH DAY.

HOLY COMMUNION OF GREAT BENEFIT TO THE DEPARTED.

The holy Doctor and Cardinal, St. Bonaventure, of the Order of St. Francis, who wrote much concerning the holy souls, urges especially frequent communion in their behalf. "Let the love and compassion for your neighbor" so he writes, "lead you to the holy table; for nothing is so well calculated to obtain eternal rest for the holy souls." This is confirmed by the following example: ' Louis Blosius relates that a pious servant of God, in a vision, beheld a departed friend, wrapped in flames, and learned from him that he suffered terribly, because he had received our Lord in Holy Communion with but little preparation. "Therefore," added this departed friend, "I beg of you, for the love we bore each other, to communicate for the benefit of my soul, but to do so with great preparation and fervor; I then hope certainly to be released from the terrible sufferings that I have indeed well deserved for my negligence towards the Blessed Sacrament." The friend at once complied with the request, and having received Holy Communion with due preparation, he saw the same soul enveloped in light, winging its happy flight to Heaven, to behold face to face the King of eternal glory.

Prayer: O Lord, Jesus Christ, Who in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar hast given us Thine own flesh and blood for the nourishment of our souls, and a pledge of our own future resurrection, grant us the grace always to receive worthily this Most Holy Mystery, that it may be to us and the souls in Purgatory a source of salvation. Who livest and reignest, world without end. Amen.

Special Intercession: Pray for the souls who were negligent in their preparation for Holy Communion.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them; may they rest in peace. Amen.

(Three times)

Invocation: My Jesus, mercy!

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TWENTIETH DAY.

LOVE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN TOWARDS THE SOULS IN PURGATORY.

Since our Divine Redeemer has given us Mary as a mother, when, dying upon the cross, He spoke to His disciple, "Behold thy mother," the Blessed Virgin regards us all as her beloved children, but she harbors most tender feelings of maternal love towards the suffering souls in Purgatory. Let us then afford the Mother of love the satisfaction of giving abundant suffrages to the souls in Purgatory. Taking into consideration the great prerogatives of the Blessed Virgin, and the infinite love of the Holy Trinity towards her, we cannot doubt that by her merit and intercession every penitent suffering soul would be delivered, that Purgatory could be emptied at once, were such according to the inscrutable ways of God.

But God has His own designs, founded on His infinite wisdom, justice, and mercy. The Blessed Virgin does not pray to have all the suffering souls delivered at once, for her will is in perfect conformity to the Will of God, and she exercises her dominion over the souls in Purgatory in perfect union with this Divine Will.

St. Bernardine of Siena applies to Mary the text of Holy Writ, "I have walked in the waves of the sea," (Eccl. xxiv. 8.) and adds, "She descends into that sea of fire, quenching the flames for the suffering souls" Denys the Carthusian attests that the souls in Purgatory experience the same joy and relief, at the mere mention of her name, that consoling words bring to the bedridden sick.

Prayer: O most holy and glorious Virgin Mary, Blessed Mother of our Lord! we place our petitions for the suffering souls into thy hands; cleanse them from all imperfections, and, by thy intercession, obtain for them eternal rest. Through the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord. Amen.

Special Intercession: Pray for the souls who were most zealous in their devotion to the Blessed Virgin.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them; may they rest in peace. Amen.
(Three times)

Practice: Say the Litany of the Blessed Virgin for the suffering souls.

Invocation: My Jesus, mercy!

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TWENTY-FIRST DAY.

EFFICACY OF THE ROSARY FOR THE SUFFERING SOULS.

St. Dominic declares that the redemption of the holy souls from Purgatory is one of the principal effects of the Rosary. The Venerable Alanus writes that many of the brethren had appeared to them whilst reciting the Rosary, and had declared that next to the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass there was no more powerful means than the Rosary to help the suffering souls. Also, that numerous souls were daily released thereby, who otherwise would have been obliged to remain there for years. St. Alphonsus Liguori therefore says: "If we wish to be of material assistance to the souls in Purgatory, we must always recommend them in our prayers to the Blessed Virgin Mary, and especially offer the holy Rosary for them."

Let us then frequently and with devotion recite the Rosary, which is so pleasing to our blessed Mother, recommended most especially by the Holy Church, discloses to us a rich source of grace, and is so efficacious in relieving the suffering souls and opening Heaven to them. Should our labor prevent us from reciting the entire Rosary every day, let us, at least, say it in part. This simple homage to the Queen of Heaven will draw down great blessings upon us, and the holy souls will be wonderfully consoled and relieved, if this devotion be offered in their behalf.

Prayer: Graciously hear, O Lord! the prayer we offer Thee in the holy Rosary, in honor of Mary, Thy Virgin Mother, for the relief of the souls in Purgatory, while by devoutly meditating upon Thy holy life and suffering, we implore Thy divine assistance. Who livest and reignest, world without end. Amen.

Special Intercession: Pray for the souls who were most devoted to the holy Rosary.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them; may they rest in peace. Amen.

(Three times)

Practice: Recite the Rosary for the suffering souls.

Invocation: My Jesus, mercy!

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TWENTY-SECOND DAY.

ALMS-GIVING AFFORDS GREAT RELIEF TO THE DEPARTED.

Besides prayer and other acts of devotion, there are practical good works we can perform for the relief of the suffering souls, among which alms-giving is one of the most prominent; for this, being a work of mercy, is especially efficacious in obtaining mercy for the holy souls. Not the rich alone are able to give alms; the poor can do so as well; since it is not the value of the gift, but the good intention, in which it is bestowed, that is acceptable in the sight of God. We also shall, one day, be numbered among the suffering souls, and who is in greater need and poverty than they? The most miserable beggar in this world can at least complain of his wants, and ask others to assist him; but the souls in Purgatory cannot do even this, for, the instances in which they are permitted to implore aid of the living are exceptional cases, and very few are on record. What consolation it will afford us when, in our own great time of need, the poor whom we befriended and comforted upon earth, in the company of the holy souls, whom we delivered by offering this work of mercy for them, shall come to our assistance by their prayers and pious supplications! Therefore, says Holy Scripture: "Do good to thy friend before thou die; and according to thy ability, stretching out thy hand, give to the poor." (Eccl. xiv. 13)

Prayer: Lord! graciously look down upon the alms we offer for the redemption of the captive souls in Purgatory. Bestow upon them the full merit thereof, that they may be able to discharge their debt; accept, we beseech Thee, this boon of charity, that delivered from debt and penalty, Thou mayest lead them into Thy heavenly kingdom. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Special Intercession: Pray for the souls of those who upon earth gave alms for the relief of the suffering souls.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them; may they rest in peace. Amen.

(Three times)

Practice: Bestow a gift upon a poor person, and offer the merit for the souls in Purgatory.

Invocation: My Jesus, mercy!

TWENTY-THIRD DAY.

WORKS OF PENANCE FOR THE HOLY SOULS.

The Church has at all times recommended, and the saints have always had recourse to works of penance as the best means of obtaining extraordinary graces from God, and there is no doubt that these works of mortification have great efficacy for the departed. Although great works of penance and mortification are not expected of every one, yet there is no one who could not occasionally deny himself a part of some favorite dish or some amusement, mortify his eyes, ears, or tongue, observe silence for a short time, bear in patience the pain of sickness, heat or cold, or any other adversity, or curb his self-will and evil inclinations; in fact, bear with submission and gratitude to God everything that causes pain or distress.

Such charity lovingly bestowed on the holy souls of our dear departed will call down rich blessings upon us, and obtain for us strength to endure our own sufferings.

"Know ye that the Lord will hear your prayers if you continue with perseverance in fastings and prayers, in the sight of the Lord." (Judith iv. ii.)

Prayer: Grant us, O Lord! the grace to walk before Thee in penance and mortification, and in these works to remember the souls in Purgatory. Deign to accept what we in the spirit of charity offer for the comfort and relief of these penitent souls. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Special Intercession: Pray for the souls of those who bestowed the merit of their mortifications upon the holy souls.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them; may they rest in peace. Amen.

(Three times)

Practice: Perform an act of mortification for the souls in Purgatory.

Invocation: My Jesus, mercy!

TWENTY-FOURTH DAY.

VALUE OF GOOD WORKS OFFERED FOR THE SUFFERING SOULS.

St. Thomas Aquinas, the Angelic Doctor, affirms that the succor and suffrage given to the departed are more acceptable to God than that which is bestowed upon the living, because the former are more in need and unable to obtain help for themselves as the living can. The revered Louis Blosius, a great master of the spiritual life, says: "Our good and merciful Lord loves the souls of His elect, who must be purified after death, and desires their release so ardently, that whenever in Christian charity we set free, by our suffrages, any soul from Purgatory, we do a thing as acceptable to God as if we had delivered the Lord Himself from a hard captivity. He promises to give us as full a recompense as such a work of mercy practised towards Himself would deserve; for He Himself has said: "Amen, I say to you: as long as you did it to one of these, My least brethren, you did it to Me" (Matth. xxv. 40.)

The same is affirmed by St. Ambrose: "Whatever we do for the suffering souls, with a pious intention, will revert to our own merit, and will be returned a hundred fold, at the hour of death."

Prayer: O God of love and mercy! animated with charity and compassion for our departed brothers and sisters, we offer Thee our prayers and good works, and supplicate Thee to accept them as a propitiatory sacrifice in their behalf. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Special Intercession: Pray for the souls of those who were negligent in offering good works for the suffering souls.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them; may they rest in peace. Amen.

(Three times)

Practice: Bear your sufferings with patience, and offer them for the holy souls.

Invocation: My Jesus, mercy!

TWENTY-FIFTH DAY.

GRATITUDE OF THE HOLY SOULS.

The prayers and works of charity which we bestow on the suffering souls in Purgatory, not only increase our spiritual merit, they also call forth the gratitude of the holy, ransomed souls; for when these dear souls are, by our endeavors, admitted to the vision of God, they cease not to prove the warmth of their thankfulness and love by imploring for us the help of which we are so much in need in the manifold dangers and great troubles of life. How can the faithful departed, who are loved by God so tenderly, and predestined to glory, fail to be able to pray, not, indeed, for themselves, because they are not in a condition to merit, yet to pray with efficacy for their benefactors still alive?

Not only will they speedily pay their debt of gratitude to those who befriend them, but, our dear Lord Himself, Whose greater honor and glory we have promoted by our devotion to the holy souls, will readily assist them to requite the services rendered them by the faithful upon earth. St. Alphonsus Liguori says: "He who assists these distressed souls, so tenderly loved by God, may confidently hope for his salvation; for, when such a soul obtains deliverance through his prayers and good works, it incessantly prays for his salvation, and God will deny nothing to such a soul."

Prayer: We beseech Thee, O Lord! vouchsafe to hear the suffering souls, who supplicate Thee for their benefactors, that we, in union with these holy souls, for whom we offer fervent prayers upon earth, may praise Thy mercies forever. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Special Intercession: Pray for the souls who suffer for their faults against charity.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them; may they rest in peace. Amen.

(Three times)

Practice: Bestow charity upon others without expecting gratitude.

Invocation: My Jesus, mercy!

TWENTY-SIXTH DAY.

BY DELIVERING THE SOULS FROM PURGATORY WE PROMOTE THE HONOR OF GOD.

According to St. Paul, the Apostle, the honor and glory of God should be the principal motive of all our actions: "Whether you eat or drink, or whatsoever else you do; do all things for the glory of God" (i. Cor. x. 31.) "The glorification of God" ought to be our special aim in our works, most particularly in our acts of charity for the dead; and justly so, for, by delivering these holy souls, we lead them to Heaven, where alone God is perfectly known, loved, and glorified.

If St. Teresa and other saints have declared their readiness to suffer all tortures imaginable for the promotion of God's glory in a single degree, what should not we do and suffer for the deliverance of these souls from the flames of Purgatory, since by doing so we increase His glory by millions of degrees, and not for one moment only, but for eternity!

Prayer: Increase, O Lord! Thy honor and glory, that all created beings may praise Thy mercy forever, because Thou hast shown clemency towards the souls who love Thee and ardently desire to behold Thee. Comfort them, then, O Lord! Let them behold Thy face in the land of the blessed, where they shall honor, praise, and glorify Thee, world without end. Amen.

Special Intercession: Pray for the souls, who, while on earth, promoted the glory of God.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them; may they rest in peace. Amen.

(Three times)

Practice: Make a good intention before every work which you perform.

Invocation: My Jesus, mercy!

TWENTY-SEVENTH DAY.

THE LORD REWARDS CHARITY TOWARDS THE HOLY SOULS.

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." (Matth. v. 7.)

Theologians assert that those who bestow mercy upon the suffering souls, shall themselves find great relief and assistance in Purgatory; they consider active charity towards the holy souls a mark of predestination to eternal happiness. It is true, says St. Thomas Aquinas, that he who satisfies for the suffering souls does not satisfy for himself, but, it is also true, adds the saint, that he deserves more than the remission of pain, namely, eternal life. Hence it is that God Himself, by the mouth of the Royal Prophet, expresses Himself; "Blessed is he that understandeth concerning the needy and the poor: the Lord will deliver him in the evil day." (Ps. xl. i.) The assistance of the holy souls is also experienced in temporal wants, in favor of their benefactors. Bishop Colmar of Mayence writes: "These destitute, suffering souls do not wait until they enter Heaven to exhibit their gratitude towards their benefactors: whilst they still languish in Purgatory, they pray without intermission for the welfare of soul and body, obtain for them recovery from disease, assistance in poverty, help in necessities, counsel and protection on journeys and in danger, preservation and increase of their temporal goods, aid them in the salvation of their souls, and, above all, come to their relief in the agonies of death and before the judgment-seat of God."

Prayer: We beseech Thee, O Lord! graciously hear the humble and fervent prayers we offer for the souls in Purgatory, and grant that the charity we extend towards our suffering brothers and sisters, may, by their supplications, obtain for us protection and help. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Special Intercession: Pray for the souls who are suffering in Purgatory for their want of gratitude.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them; may they rest in peace. Amen.

(Three times)

Practice: In spiritual and temporal wants, take refuge to the holy souls.

Invocation: My Jesus, mercy!

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TWENTY-EIGHTH DAY.

THEY HAVE GREAT REASON TO FEAR, WHO SHOW NO MERCY TOWARDS THE SOULS DEPARTED.

"With what measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again." (Math. vii. 2.)

It will be readily seen that this word of the Divine Saviour is applicable also to the assistance we should render the souls departed. The learned Cardinal Cajetan says: "Those who in this life forget the departed, will, hereafter, in my opinion, be deprived in Purgatory of all participation in good works and devout prayers, though ever so many be offered for them by others; for Divine Justice is wont in this manner to punish their cruelty and hardness of heart." Hence, he who shows no mercy towards the suffering souls and remains cold and indifferent to their pains, shall, even though his soul may have escaped eternal damnation, languish in the flames of Purgatory, without relief and consolation, and look in vain for friends and intercessors. The faithful, however, who do not forget the suffering souls completely, but seldom think of them, will not be deprived of friends and intercessors entirely, but will derive very little help and comfort, and their complaints will be answered by the words of St. Paul: "He who soweth sparingly, shall also reap sparingly" (2 Cor. ix. 6.)

Prayer: O God! Whose goodness and mercy are infinite, have pity on the souls of those, who, on account of their want of charity, are undeserving of Thy bounty, and accept our fervent prayers, in reparation for their faults, that they may not suffer without consolation. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Special Intercession: Pray for the souls who suffer for their want of charity.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them; may they rest in peace. Amen.

(Three times)

Practice: Bear patiently the ingratitude of others, and offer it for the souls in Purgatory.

Invocation: My Jesus, mercy!

TWENTY-NINTH DAY.

PERSEVERANCE IN PRAYERS FOR THE DEPARTED.

Holy Church, our good and tender mother, most ardently desires that her children be admitted to the beatific vision of God, and incessantly offers pious supplications, during the Holy Sacrifice of Mass and the Divine office, to obtain mercy for the holy suffering souls, thereby teaching us to think of them frequently; for to the end of time there shall be souls in the flames of Purgatory in need of assistance and fervent prayers, which we should never fail to offer in their behalf. The ways of God are often inscrutable, and His designs concerning the holy souls are unknown to us; hence there may be among their number some who have a just claim on our assistance, although a long time may have passed away since the close of their earthly career. Should the souls of our own beloved dead no longer be in need of our suffrages, they will be bestowed upon others, who are deserving of our mercy as well; thus, our prayer, our labor of love, will not be less salutary and meritorious, and, indeed, life is not too long for us to practice this genuine charity to the end.

Prayer: We beseech Thee, O Lord! grant us the grace to persevere in our charity towards the souls in Purgatory; deign to look with eyes of mercy upon these penitent souls; deliver them from their suffering, and open to them the portals of Heaven. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Special Intercession: Pray for the souls who suffer for inconstancy in the service of God.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them; may they rest in peace. Amen.

(Three times)

Practice: Examine how you have kept your good resolutions, particularly in what manner you have performed your devotions and works of charity for the suffering souls.

Invocation: My Jesus, mercy!

THIRTIETH DAY.

THE HEROIC ACT OF CHARITY FOR THE SOULS IN PURGATORY.

This heroic act, in behalf of the souls in Purgatory, consists in a voluntary offering made in their favor to the Divine Majesty, by any one of the faithful, of all works of satisfaction done by him in his life, as well as of all the suffrages which shall be offered for him after his death. By this offering he foregoes in their behalf only that special fruit which belongs to himself, so that he is not hindered thereby in praying for his own necessities, or those of others. This act of charity, therefore, will not deprive us of any merit. Besides, by resigning our own claims on all works of satisfaction in favor of the souls departed, we shall gain for ourselves the special love of God, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and all the saints, according to the promise of Christ: "With what measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again." (Matth. vii. 2.) Furthermore, the gratitude of the holy souls will induce them, in turn, to pray for us in Heaven, so that we may either escape Purgatory, or be blessed by a speedy deliverance there from.

This heroic act of charity has been enriched with many indulgences. (No. 547.) They are as follows:

- I. The Indult of a Privileged Altar, personally, every day in the year to all priests who shall have made this offering.
- II. A Plenary Indulgence daily, applicable only to the departed, to all the faithful, who shall have made this offering, whenever they go to Holy Communion, provided they visit a church or public oratory, and pray there for some time for the intention of his Holiness.
- III. A Plenary Indulgence, every Monday, to all who hear Mass in aid of the souls in Purgatory, provided they fulfill the other conditions mentioned above. (No. 547.)

Prayer: We humbly beseech Thee, O Lord ! graciously accept our prayers, with the indulgences attached, for the suffering souls. We offer Thee, in their behalf, the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Redeemer, and His infinite merits united with the merits of His most holy, Immaculate Virgin Mother Mary, her ever-glorious spouse, St. Joseph, the holy Apostles, and all the spirits of Heaven, that by virtue of these merits our devotion may be to them a source of consolation, and open to them the portals of Heaven, there to love, praise, and glorify Thee, world without end. Amen.

Special Intercession: Pray for the souls, who, while on earth, made the Heroic Act of Charity.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them; may they rest in peace. Amen.

(Three times)

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Practice: Endeavor, every day, to perform an act of charity for the suffering souls.

Invocation: My Jesus, mercy!

THIRTY-FIRST DAY.

BY A GOOD INTENTION TO MAKE EVEN OUR MOST TRIVIAL ACTIONS AND SUFFERINGS MERITORIOUS, AND OFFER THEM FOR THE DELIVERANCE OF THE HOLY SOULS.

As rational beings we should have a distinct object in view in all our actions. By performing even the most trivial act from the motive, thereby to please our dear Lord, and to do His holy will, they may become meritorious. It is understood that these acts are not contrary to the commandments of God and His holy Church, and that the person be in a state of grace. People who are working from early in the morning till late at night can assist the suffering souls in an efficacious manner by offering their toil and fatigue in union with the merits of Jesus and Mary for the relief of the suffering souls. Sick persons, and those enduring mental sufferings, such as temptations, scruples, contempt, slander, unjust treatment; those who mourn for the loss of a near relative or a dear friend, etc., may make the same intention in regard to their particular suffering.

Prayer: My dear Redeemer, how many occasions have I lost to gain merits by a good intention, and thus to assist Thy holy spouses! Pardon my negligence, and graciously assist me to turn every precious moment of time to advantage by a good intention, and to make up for the past. In union with Thy merits, and those of Thy holy Mother Mary and all the saints, I unite all my thoughts, words, deeds, and spiritual and bodily sufferings for the future, till my last breath, and offer them for the suffering souls. In return I beseech the holy souls to obtain for me, and all those for whom I am in duty and love bound to pray, spiritual and temporal favors, and abundant grace to lead a holy life and persevere to the end of their life. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen

Special Petition: Pray for the souls who spent time uselessly, and were negligent in making and renewing the good intention.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them; may they rest in peace. Amen.

(Three times)

Practice: When rising in the morning I shall never omit to make my good intention for the coming day, and to renew the same at least every hour, by saying: For love of Jesus and Mary, and the relief of the suffering souls.

Invocation: My Jesus, mercy!

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