

# Catholic Candle

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## Words to Live By – From Catholic Tradition

### *A Remedy for Our Sins during our Time of Apostasy*

After our baptism, Our Lord has given us other, daily remedies. The *Lord's Prayer* is our daily purification. Let us say, and let us say with sincerity because it is an alms in itself: “Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors.” Give alms and all things are clean to you.”

St. Augustine, Doctor of the Church, Sermon #261 *For the Feast Of The Ascension*

**Catholic Candle note:** It is true at all times of the Church that our sins are remitted through praying the *Our Father* well. How much more does Divine Providence make the *Our Father* efficacious for the remission of sins during the present Great Apostasy, when our Loving Heavenly Father has willed to withdraw the Sacraments from faithful and informed Catholics, most of whom do not currently have access to an uncompromising priest!

God has not abandoned us! Rather, He lovingly gives us different efficacious tools to use to help us to save our souls during these apostate times. Read these articles:

- *A “Good” Life is Possible in the Catacombs:* <https://catholiccandle.org/2022/06/27/a-good-life-is-possible-in-the-catacombs/>
- *Life and Salvation in the Catacombs Without the Sacraments:* <https://catholiccandle.org/2021/11/10/life-and-salvation-in-the-catacombs-without-the-sacraments/>
- *Excuses for Compromise Confessions:* <http://www.catholiccandle.org/2020/09/01/excuses-for-compromise-confessions/>

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**Catholic Candle note:** The article below is part twenty-first part of the study of the temperaments, starting with the Choleric temperament. Here are links to the first twenty parts:

1. Part I: Beginning our Study of the Choleric Temperament:  
<https://catholiccandle.org/2024/08/27/lesson-35-about-the-temperaments-the-choleric-temperament/>
2. Part II: A general overview of the weaknesses of the Choleric Temperament:  
<https://catholiccandle.org/2024/09/26/lesson-37-about-the-temperaments-continuation-of-the-choleric-temperament/>
3. Part III: A consideration of the pride of the Choleric Temperament:  
<https://catholiccandle.org/2024/10/24/lesson-38-temperaments-choleric-temperament-their-spiritual-combat/>
4. Part IV: A general discussion of anger as a passion – in order to establish a foundation for studying anger in the Choleric Temperament:  
<https://catholiccandle.org/2024/11/26/lesson-39-temperaments-choleric-temperament-their-spiritual-combat-part-iv/>
5. Part V: Concerning the motivations for anger:  
<https://catholiccandle.org/2024/12/30/lesson-40-temperaments-choleric-temperament-their-spiritual-combat-part-v/>
6. Part VI: Concerning what anger does to the body:  
<https://catholiccandle.org/2025/01/27/lesson-41-temperaments-choleric-temperament-a-choleric-spiritual-combat-part-vi/>
7. Part VII: Explaining when anger is sinful:  
<https://catholiccandle.org/2025/02/21/lesson-42-temperaments-choleric-temperament-a-choleric-spiritual-combat-part-vii/>
8. Part VIII: Explaining how being slighted provokes anger:  
<https://catholiccandle.org/2025/03/27/lesson-42-temperaments-choleric-temperament-a-choleric-spiritual-combat-part-viii/>
9. Part IX: Explaining how anger turns into the sin of holding a grudge:  
<https://catholiccandle.org/2025/04/23/lesson-44-temperaments-choleric-temperament-a-choleric-spiritual-combat-part-ix/>
10. Part X: Recommendations to help choleric to overcome pride:  
<https://catholiccandle.org/2025/05/20/lesson-45-temperaments-choleric-temperament-a-choleric-spiritual-combat-part-x/>

[temperament-a-cholerics-spiritual-combat-part-x/](#)

11. Part XI: Explaining how a person sins by not using his reason: <https://catholiccandle.org/2025/06/28/lesson-46-temperaments-choleric-temperament-a-cholerics-spiritual-combat-part-xi/>
12. Part XII: Explaining some reasons why a choleric does not use his reason properly: <https://catholiccandle.org/2025/07/24/lesson-47-temperaments-choleric-temperament-a-cholerics-spiritual-combat-part-xii/>
13. Part XIII: Explaining why the choleric fears to use his reason well: <https://catholiccandle.org/2025/08/29/lesson-48-temperaments-choleric-temperament-a-cholerics-spiritual-combat-part-xiii/>
14. Part XIV: Explaining generally how Satan targets our fallen and weakened intellects: <https://catholiccandle.org/2025/09/24/lesson-49-temperaments-choleric-temperament-the-cholerics-spiritual-combat-part-xiv/>
15. Part XV: Explaining the passions in general, to lay the foundation for our consideration of the passion of fear: <https://catholiccandle.org/2025/10/26/3050/>
16. Part XVI: Explaining fear as a passion: <https://catholiccandle.org/2025/11/25/lesson-51-temperaments-choleric-temperament-the-cholerics-spiritual-combat-part-xvi/>
17. Part XVII: Explaining how fear works in the soul and influences all of the temperaments: <https://catholiccandle.org/2025/12/29/lesson-52-temperaments-choleric-temperament-the-cholerics-spiritual-combat-part-xvii/>
18. Part XVIII: Explaining how pain and death are objects of fear for persons of any temperament: <https://catholiccandle.org/2026/01/26/lesson-53-temperaments-choleric-temperament-pain-and-death-are-objects-of-fearf-any-temperament/>
19. Part XIX: Explaining in what way sin is an object of fear for all temperaments: <https://catholiccandle.org/2026/02/26/lesson-54-temperaments-choleric-temperament-whether-sin-is-an-object-of-fear-for-all-temperaments/>
20. Part XX: Explaining the causes of fear – applying to all temperaments: <https://catholiccandle.org/2026/03/31/marys-school-of-sanctity-3/>
21. Part XXI – Explaining the Effects of Fear in All Temperaments: <https://catholiccandle.org/2026/04/26/about-the-temperaments-part-xxi-explaining-the-effects-of-fear-in-all-temperaments/>

# Mary's School of Sanctity

## ***Lesson #57 – About the Temperaments Part XXII – Explaining How to Order Our Loves So We Can Use the Passion of Fear Properly, and How the Devil Attempts to Prevent this Ordering***

In our most recent lessons we have studied the causes of fear and the effects of fear on our bodies and souls. We discussed briefly the role that love plays in determining our fears and likewise the role that the imagination has in our passion of fear. We said that our loves must be orderly and reasonable and that we must control our imagination to make it reasonable also. At this point it is necessary to delve deeper into our spiritual battle and the means we must take to ensure we are indeed monitoring our loves as we ought; and controlling our imagination to keep it reasonable. Our salvation depends on how well we know ourselves and how we cooperate with God's graces and blessings. **In this lesson we focus on three main ideas:**

- 1. The plan of our arch-enemy;**
- 2. The teaching of our dear Holy Mother Church; and**
- 3. Satan's attempts to disorder man's loves.**

Below, we discuss each of these.

### **1. The Plan of Our Arch-Enemy – Satan's Plan Has Not Changed**

Since the fall of Adam the devil has not changed his methods of luring man into sin. We may think that humans had an easier battle against Satan in another period of history. For example, one may think that it was easier for people to save their souls in the Middle Ages because there weren't so many distractions, such as, modern technology and because their lives were not as hectic as in our modern times.

However, we must remind ourselves that all throughout human history man has had to contend with the devil and all his worldly allurements. Certainly, the devil will use whatever is available to distract a person from doing his duty. Nevertheless, we must keep in mind that fallen human nature has not changed. We could simply say that Satan tries to get men to commit the Seven Capital Sins (Pride, Sloth, Gluttony, Envy, Anger, Lust, and Avarice), and this is true. However, there are two chief fronts of attack that the devil uses against mankind.

## **Satan's Two Main Lines of Attack**

The devil traps souls in these two main ways:

- Through getting humans to not use their reason;  

(We must not forget that the devil will use just about *anything* to distract someone from reasoning – especially reasoning carefully!)
- Through getting humans to focus on their bodies including pleasures and comforts.

It is important to note here that the easiest way for the devil to capture souls is through sins of the flesh. Our Lady warned us at Fatima that “more people go to hell because of sins of the flesh than for any other reason.”<sup>1</sup> (She also reminded us that these souls fall because they have no one to pray and do sacrifice for them.)

We will discuss more about the first of these lines of demonic attack in this present lesson, and then about the second type of attack in lessons to come. First, however, we must connect what we have studied about fear so far with this overall plan of the devil.

## **The Role That Fear Plays in the Devil's Work**

Because the devil knows that our fears are based on what we love and what we imagine, he uses his knowledge of us in designing his snares against us. Thus, it is important that we apply what we have been studying about fear in order to defend ourselves against Satan's tricks – one of which is use fear in a twisted manner.

## **2. The Teaching of Holy Mother Church**

### **Our Best Defense against Satan is Understanding the Church's Teaching about Proper Fear**

Let's begin by examining what the Church tells us about proper fear. We were taught in our Catechism that Fear of the Lord is a Gift of the Holy Ghost. “The beginning of wisdom is fear of the Lord” (Proverbs 1:7).

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<sup>1</sup> *The Whole Truth About Fatima*, Frere Michel de la Sante Trinite, Vol. II, Ch.4, Appendix II.

With this precious Gift, we are intended to have filial fear which is “the dread of offending God based on love for Him.”<sup>2</sup> This is in contrast with servile fear of God which is “the dread of the punishment which God inflicts on sinners”.<sup>3</sup>

St. Bernard of Clairvaux explains the difference between *servile fear* and *filial fear*. He describes servile fear as follows:

The slave and the hireling have a law, not from the Lord, but of their own contriving; the one does not love God, the other loves something else more than God. They have a law of their own, not of God, I say; yet it [their own law] is subject to the law of the Lord. For though they [*viz*, the slave and the hireling] can make laws for themselves, they cannot supplant the changeless order of the Eternal Law. Each man is a law unto himself, when he sets up his will against the universal laws, perversely striving to rival his Creator, to be wholly independent, making his will his only law.<sup>4</sup>

He adds more about servile fear as follows:

He was a burden to himself through the law which was of his own devising: yet he could not escape God’s law, for he was set as a mark against God. The Eternal Law of righteousness ordains that he who will not submit to God’s sweet rule shall suffer the bitter tyranny of self: but he who wears the easy yoke and light burden of love will escape the intolerable weight of his own self-will.<sup>5</sup>

Then St. Bernard contrasts servile fear with filial fear:

Freed from the weight of my own will, I can breathe easily under the light burden of love. I shall not be coerced by fear, nor allured by mercenary desires. I for one shall be led by the Spirit of God, that free Spirit whereby Thy sons are led which beareth witness with my spirit that I am among the children of God.

Love is a good and pleasant law; it is not only easy to bear, but it makes the laws of slaves and hirelings tolerable; not destroying but completing them; as the Lord

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<sup>2</sup> This definition is taken from the *Concise Catholic Dictionary* by Robert C Broderick, M.A., The Bruce Publishing Company of America, ©1944, p.63.

<sup>3</sup> This definition is taken from the *Concise Catholic Dictionary* by Robert C Broderick, M.A., The Bruce Publishing Company of America, ©1944, p.63.

<sup>4</sup> St. Bernard of Clairvaux, Doctor of the Church, *Treatise on the Love of God*, Ch.13 (bracketed words added to show context).

<sup>5</sup> St. Bernard of Clairvaux, Doctor of the Church, *Treatise on the Love of God*, Ch.13 (bracketed words added to show context).

saith: 'I am not come to destroy the law, but to fulfill' (Matt 5:17). It tempers the fear of the slave, it regulates the desires of the hireling, it mitigates the severity of each.

Love is never without fear, but it is a godly fear. Love is never without desire, but it is a lawful desire. So love perfects the law of service by infusing devotion. It perfects the law of wages by restraining covetousness. Devotion mixed with fear does not destroy fear – devotion purges fear.

Then the burden of fear which was intolerable while it was only servile, becomes tolerable; and the fear itself remains ever pure and filial ... . Self-interest is restrained within due bounds when love supervenes. For then self-interest rejects evil things altogether, prefers better things to those merely good, and cares for the good only on account of the better.

In like manner, by God's grace, it will come about that man will love his body and the things pertaining to his body, for the sake of his soul. He will love his soul for God's sake; and he will love God for Himself alone.<sup>6</sup>

### 3. Satan's Attempt to Disorder Man's Loves

Man's reason is his highest faculty. God intends that man use this faculty to learn more about Him. Man usually starts by observing the world around him and then comes to know universal truths gradually.<sup>7</sup> God, being the Sculptor of Souls, draws souls to Him

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<sup>6</sup> St. Bernard of Clairvaux, Doctor of the Church, *Treatise on the Love of God*, Ch.14 (bracketed words added to show context).

<sup>7</sup> Read the following articles about the blessings of a True Catholic Liberal Education:

- ❖ *What True Education Is* – This article can be found here: <https://catholiccandle.org/2025/07/24/the-blessing-of-a-true-catholic-liberal-education-part-ii/>
- ❖ *The Difference Between the Education which is Appropriate for a Free Man as Contrasted to the Education which is Appropriate for a Slave* -- This article can be found here: <https://catholiccandle.org/2026/02/26/the-blessing-of-a-true-catholic-liberal-education-part-vii/>
- ❖ *"Making the Truth "Our Own"* -- This article can be found here: <https://catholiccandle.org/2026/03/10/the-blessing-of-a-true-catholic-liberal-education-part-viii/>

in order to have a beautiful friendship which He intends to culminate in the celestial possession of Himself, *viz.*, the Beatific Vision.

Man has a foretaste of this Vision when he ponders deeply about the high truths concerning God. God created man to have a sense of wonder and to have a desire to know truth. Therefore, God designed it to be really exhilarating and satisfying for man to consider something deeply, come to proper conclusions, and in this way come to know a truth.

Furthermore, God intends that deep consideration of truth, especially high truths, should inflame the soul with appreciation for that truth. In turn, God wills that this same appreciation will foster gratitude and then love for Him, while also bringing humility into the soul.<sup>8</sup>

Consequently, it follows that man learning truth inspires gratitude, humility, and love of God – which likewise fosters friendship with God and our neighbor. With all of this in mind, it is easy to see that God intends man to have a life of virtue wherein he is unselfish and is full of **filial love** of God and a genuine love of his neighbor.

Of course, all of this is the opposite of what Satan seeks for souls. Satan does not want God to come first in our lives. He does not want us to learn to love God and certainly does not want us to grow in love of God. He does not want us to love our neighbor or to be unselfish. He does not want us to grow in virtue. He does not want us to discipline our minds, and control our imagination. In short, he does not want us to lead a life of reason and he certainly does not want us to think deeply!

Satan tempts men of all temperaments to avoid using their reason. Here are some of his common lies:

- It is too hard to think, especially to think deeply;
- It is so tiring to think or to try to understand and figure something out;
- It takes too much time to think, because we have to get something done quickly, after all, we are supposed to be efficient workers;
- It is so boring to dig deeply into things;
- It taxes the body too much to think;

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<sup>8</sup> Read this article: *A True Catholic Liberal Education is so Great, Will It Make Us Proud?*  
This article can be found here: <https://catholiccandle.org/2026/01/26/3129/>

- It makes one “proud” to think carefully because a person only does this when he wants to be “noticed” and thought to be “clever”;
- I am not “intellectually” inclined or “gifted” and therefore, I simply cannot think and I certainly cannot think carefully or deeply;
- I do not want people to label me as “brainy”; and
- It is too much of a bother to think about God, or our Faith.

Here are some typical traits regarding thinking, as related to the four temperaments:

- ❖ Choleric and sanguines tend to be extroverted but also shallower.

This does NOT mean that they cannot think deeply or learn to love to think deeply. All Catholics are all called to the life of high contemplation (even though contemplation is a gift of God).

- ❖ Melancholics and phlegmatics are more introverted and tend to be deeper thinkers.

Nevertheless, the tactic of Satan is to have all people not desire to use their highest faculty (which is their intellect). Thus, Satan uses his tactic (to get man to not use his reason) not only against persons of one temperament but against everyone.

The devil targets all men in his attempt to get them to not LOVE thinking deeply and well. He wants to instill sloth in us so that the spiritual life and things of God are unappealing to us humans.

## A Preview...

In our next lesson we will discuss more about the lies of the devil listed above and the devil’s temptations to twist our loves in order to lead us away from God, primarily through sloth. We will discuss strategies on how to counterattack Satan’s poms.



**Catholic Candle note:** Genuine conservatives and uncompromising Traditional Catholics are extremely rare. Most people who consider themselves conservative, traditional, or uncompromising, are really only “conserving” the less extreme liberalism or decadence from a few decades ago when things were not as bad as they are now. But whatever the intentions and self-image of these people are, objectively they are **not really** and **fully** conservatives. They are only comparatively less liberal or less decadent than the society around them.

One aspect of being Traditional Catholic is to hold the traditional standard of feminine modesty. The article below addresses modest sleeves for women and girls. This is only one condition required for fulfilling the Catholic standard of *Marylike* modesty.

This article is a companion article to these other *Catholic Candle* articles about *Marylike* modesty:

- † *Dress for Success ... in Getting to Heaven:*  
<https://catholiccandle.org/2020/11/01/dress-for-success-in-getting-to-heaven/>
- † *Marylike Neckline Modesty:*<https://catholiccandle.org/2023/05/21/marylike-neckline-modesty/>
- † *Women should Wear Dresses and Skirts, Not Pants:*  
<https://catholiccandle.org/2024/03/21/women-should-wear-dresses-and-skirts-not-pants-2/>

## Modest Sleeves for Women and Girls

### *A Defense of the Traditional Catholic Standard of Modesty*

We live in a pagan world. Most Catholic women and girls adopt some version of the evil fashions they see all around them. Dressing like a faithful and informed Catholic involves many things. One of these for women and girls is feminine modesty in sleeves.

But before considering that issue, let us first inquire whether this subject is one that only women and girls need to know about.

### **Is it Important for Men and Boys (as well as Women and Girls) to Know the Catholic Standard for Feminine Modesty?**

Both sexes should care about feminine modesty and know the standards of Catholic modesty. It is obvious that a woman should understand and live the Catholic standard of modesty so that she can please God, edify her neighbor, be a good example to other women and girls, teach her daughters, and avoid sin.

But there are five reasons why men (and boys) should also know these standards:

1. It is important for men and boys to know the standards of female modesty because they have a duty to avert their eyes from women's and girl's attire which does not comply with such modesty standards.

This is obvious. A crucial reason why women and girls **have** standards of modesty (and must not “wear whatever they want to”) is because there **are** men and boys who will look at them.

Women must **cover up** for the sake of the men. This is common decency and is a minimum charity that they owe to their (male) neighbors. Women would be callously disregarding the salvation of men (and themselves) if women dressed without concern for the temptations their attire would cause in men.

This is like the fact that a person must not wildly swing a butcher knife “whenever he wants to” without regard for the risk of injuring those around him. In fact, immodesty can be more dangerous than a butcher knife because immodesty can kill the soul whereas a butcher knife can only kill the body.

Of course, it is also true that men must dress modestly for the sake of the women too. This is part of men’s minimum charity toward their (female) neighbors. However, there are three reasons that female immodesty is a greater problem:

- Women are the more beautiful sex and so are more attractive;
- Men are more prone than women are to sins of impurity by looking impurely at the opposite sex, as is evident by the fact that the filthy practice of viewing pornography is a sin which is far more frequently committed by men rather than by women; and
- Both men and women are more inclined to dilute modesty standards for females than for males. This is because women have a stronger focus on pleasing men by their (*i.e.*, women’s) appearance, and men have less of a focus on pleasing women by their own (*i.e.*, the men’s) appearance but have a greater tendency to **be pleased** by women’s appearance (than are women focused on and pleased by men’s appearance). Here are three signs that this is true:

**first**, women desire (and usually have) a far larger wardrobe and wear far more jewelry than men do;

**second**, women take many other pains to look attractive for men, such as wearing makeup, getting their hair curled or permed, *etc.*, and

**third**, men’s clothes and shoes are more practical and serviceable. By contrast, women’s clothes and shoes are much more likely to be less comfortable because they are designed more to please men rather than for comfort. (For example, women’s shoes are usually designed more to make a woman’s foot look smaller than for her comfort.)

2. It is important for an unmarried man who is called to the married vocation (and not to the life of a consecrated religious) to have prominently featured in his “blue print” of the future spouse he seeks, that she possess and love this great treasure of the Catholic standard of holy modesty.<sup>9</sup> This man himself would need to understand the standard of feminine modesty in order to assess whether a potential future spouse follows and loves this standard;

3. It is important for a man to know the Catholic standard of feminine modesty so that he can give moral support and defend the modesty of good women against scoffers, mockers, and other enemies of Our Lord. (For example, women and girls who take modesty seriously are often made to feel prudish and isolated, especially by other women who have a more liberal dress code.) Men should be gallant and gentlemanly. They should defend women, especially good women who are living the standards of modesty and other virtues;

4. It is important for a man to know the Catholic standard of feminine modesty because he will be ultimately responsible for guiding his wife and daughters (when God sends to him his own family) and he will be ultimately responsible for this standard being implemented in his own home and family;<sup>10</sup> and

5. It is important for a man to know the Catholic standard of feminine modesty so he can love this beautiful virtue and admire and appreciate the *Marylike* women and girls who practice it.

## **Brief Reminder: Because of Original Sin, We Are Prone to Evil, Especially to Sins of the Flesh**

Our nature is wounded by original sin:

1. Our intellect is darkened;

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<sup>9</sup> Truly, an unmarried man is a fool if the future wife that he seeks is not *first-of-all* a woman of deep virtue – including modesty. Further, an unmarried woman should realize that the potential future husband she is attracting would not be a man of virtue (who prioritizes virtue in his future family), if she does not *love and live* the virtues herself.

<sup>10</sup> Here is how Pope Pius XI declared the responsibility of parents for the modesty of their children:

**Let parents never permit their daughters to don immodest garb.**

Quoted from #3 of the January 12, 1930 Instruction issued by the Sacred Congregation of the Council at the order of Pope Pius XI.

2. Our will is weakened;
3. Our passions are unruly and rebellious; and
4. We are inclined to evil.

But our duty and our happiness require that we be pure and modest in thought, word, and deed. Impure deeds, words, and thoughts lead to Hell:

❖ **Impure deeds lead to Hell:**

Do not err: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor the effeminate ... shall possess the kingdom of God. 1 *Corinthians*. 6:9-10.

❖ **Impure words lead to Hell:**

But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not so much as be named among you, as becometh saints: or obscenity<sup>11</sup>, or foolish talking, or scurrility, which is to no purpose. *Ephesians*, 5:3-4.

The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is placed among our members, which defileth the whole body .... *St. James*, 3:6.

❖ **Consenting to Impure thoughts, imaginings, and glances leads to Hell:**

Whosoever shall look on a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart. *St. Matthew's Gospel*, 5:28.

External words and actions are the fruit of internal thoughts and desires:

The things which proceed out of the mouth, come forth from the heart, and ... from the heart come forth ... adulteries, fornications .... *St. Matthew's Gospel*, 15:18-19.

Plainly, women are the more beautiful sex. But the Church recognizes that the body, though good, is not the highest good; and a body that is shamelessly unregulated by virtue and reason is notoriously bad.

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<sup>11</sup> For a fuller analysis of the evil of obscene speech, read this article: <https://catholiccandle.neocities.org/faith/sins-caused-by-obscene-speech>

Satan especially promotes impurity because he knows impurity is such an effective tool for damning souls. Our Lady warned at Fatima that “more people go to hell because of sins of the flesh than for any other reason.”<sup>12</sup>

Therefore, modesty requires that we do everything we reasonably can to avoid whatever inflames our passions or the passions of others, and so makes it harder to avoid sins against the holy virtue of purity. A person is potentially the murderer of another person’s soul by failing to guard against inflaming his passions.

Modesty requires great care related to thoughts, words, and deeds. These deeds include concealing the body instead of unduly emphasizing it or revealing it.

## **Dangers Regarding Impurity Are Different for Men and Women**

Men and women are different and possess different tendencies towards impurity. Men are more easily led into sins against purity through their sense of sight. For this reason, modesty for men chiefly requires custody of their eyes as the guard of purity.<sup>13</sup>

By contrast, women are more tempted in matters of impurity through vanity by seeking to attract the eyes of men by excessive exposure of their (*viz.*, the women’s) bodies. Thus, it is in the “nature” of women that they are more interested in being admired by men for their appearance rather than admiring men’s appearance. Also, as noted above, men are more interested in the appearance of women than they are interested in women admiring *their* (*viz.*, the men’s) appearance.

Of course, this does not mean that men should be unconcerned with the modesty of their own dress or that women should be unconcerned with custody of their own eyes. But the stronger, typical tendencies are for men to encounter dangers against purity because of looking at women, and women to encounter dangers against purity by the way they seek to attract men’s eyes by their appearance. These different tendencies of the two sexes are why men are the usual consumers of pornography and women are the usual subjects of pornography.

Further, because God made woman the more beautiful and attractive sex, He made women’s bodies more sensual. Thus, the virtue of modesty requires that this greater attractiveness be concealed with womanly attire, which takes Nature into account. So,

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<sup>12</sup> *The Whole Truth About Fatima*, Frere Michel de la Sante Trinite, Vol. II, Ch.4, Appendix II.

<sup>13</sup> Truly, an unmarried woman is a fool if the future husband that she seeks is not *first-of-all* a man of deep virtue – including the strong, manly custody of his eyes.

women must wear clothes that cover up more – including sleeves of proper length and that are otherwise modest.

## The Catholic Standard Ordered by Pope Pius XI:

Pope Pius XI ordered the following standard to be published:

We remind all concerned that a garment cannot be considered modest if it leaves the base of the neck exposed by more than two finger-widths<sup>14</sup>; if it fails to **cover the arm at least as far as the elbow**; or if it does not extend slightly below the knee.<sup>15</sup> Likewise, a garment made of transparent fabric is not considered modest, nor are stockings that so perfectly mimic the color of the skin as to create the illusion that the leg is bare.<sup>16</sup>

Although Pope Pius XI's standard refers to multiple aspects of feminine modesty, the present article focuses on the virtue of modesty requiring feminine sleeves to extend at least to the elbow.

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<sup>14</sup> As shown here, the correct standard of modesty is proportional. So a modest, minimum length for the skirt of a tall woman would not be the same minimum length for a short woman or a girl because the tall woman's legs are longer. Similarly, a blouse's neckline would be a different maximum distance from the base of a woman's neck for a tall woman compared to a short woman or a girl. This is accounted for by every female using the width of her own fingers in gauging the maximum distance from her blouse's neckline to the base of her neck.

<sup>15</sup> **Catholic Candle note:** This standard requires that a woman's or a girl's knees be entirely covered, at **all** times not only sometimes. Thus, the **full** knee must be covered whether she is standing, sitting, kneeling, genuflecting, running, walking, going up or down stairs, riding a bicycle, outside on a windy day, *etc.*

<sup>16</sup> Published by Cardinal Vicar Basilio Pompili at the direction of Pope Pius XI, September 24, 1928.

Here is the Italian version of this standard, published contemporaneously:

Ricordiamo che non può essere ritenuto modesto il vestito che lasci scoperta per più di due dita la base del collo, quello che non copra il braccio almeno fino al gomito e quello che non scenda un poco più giù del ginocchio. Egualmente non è modesto l'abito di stoffa trasparente, e la calza che imiti perfettamente il color della carne tanto da far credere che la gamba sia ignuda.

Published by Cardinal Vicar Basilio Pompili at the direction of Pope Pius XI, September 24, 1928, in the *Bollettino Del Clero Romano*, October, 1928, p.134. This October, 1928 issue of the periodical can be found here: <https://archive.org/details/circolare-alle-superiore-degli-istituti-religiosi-femminili>

## **Feminine Modesty Pertains to Sleeves in Six Ways.**

Sleeves must:

1. Be long enough;
2. Not be made of a flesh-colored material (*i.e.*, a color creating the illusion of bare skin);
3. Not be made of transparent or “see-through” material;
4. Not be too tight;
5. Not be made of a fabric that is too supple or clingy; and
6. Not allow a “line of sight” up a woman’s or a girl’s arm inside her sleeve, above her elbow.

Below, we discuss each of these requirements for modest sleeves.

### **1. Sleeves Must Not Be Too Short**

Pope Pius XI’s standard explicitly requires that a woman’s or a girl’s sleeve must “cover the arm at least as far as the elbow”.<sup>17</sup>

Obviously, a sleeve which is too short is one way that a sleeve can be immodest, *viz.*, by exposing a woman’s or a girl’s upper arm.

### **2. Sleeves Must Not Be Made of a Flesh-Colored Material (*i.e.*, a Color Creating the Illusion of Bare Skin)**

Pope Pius XI’s standard warns about the immodesty of garments which “mimic the color of the skin [so] as to create the illusion that the leg is bare”.<sup>18</sup> Although this is said in the context of immodest stockings, this same problem plainly occurs whenever any garment is similar enough to the color of the woman’s or girl’s skin that there is an illusion of improper exposure of any part of her body which must be covered.

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<sup>17</sup> September 24, 1928 standard published at the order of Pope Pius XI.

<sup>18</sup> September 24, 1928 standard published at the order of Pope Pius XI.

### **3. Sleeves Must Not Be Made of Transparent or “See-Through” Material**

Pope Pius XI’s standard includes the warning that “a garment made of transparent fabric is not considered modest”.<sup>19</sup>

This is obvious. Clothes are supposed to conceal certain parts of the body. However, transparent fabrics, laces, nets, organdy, nylons, *etc.* do not do this sufficiently, as Pope Pius XI warns.

There is nothing inherently wrong with laces, nets, organdy, and nylons. They can add to the beauty and charm of feminine clothing. Such fabrics, however, should be considered as mere ornaments – additions to *already-modest* clothing. Thus, such fabrics should be placed on top of another fabric which is modest.

### **4. Sleeves Must Not Be Too Tight**

Clothes are immodest if they are too tight. This is obvious. Clothes are supposed to conceal certain parts of the body. However, if sleeves are too tight or form-fitting, they do not sufficiently conceal the woman’s or girl’s upper arm, which must remain concealed to be modest.<sup>20</sup>

### **5. Sleeves Must Not Be Made of a Fabric Which is Too Supple or Clingy**

Just like sleeves which are too tight reveal too much of the shape and contours of a woman’s or girl’s body, likewise sleeves made out of a fabric which is too supple or clingy has this same defect: it does not sufficiently conceal the female form.

Just as paint is not suitable to be used as clothing/covering – even if it is completely opaque – because it is too conforming to the shape of the body, likewise fabric is immodest and inappropriate if it is too supple and conforms too much to the shape of the body.

### **6. Sleeves Must Not Allow a “Line of Sight” Up a Woman’s or a Girl’s Arm Above Her Elbow**

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<sup>19</sup> September 24, 1928 standard published at the order of Pope Pius XI.

<sup>20</sup> September 24, 1928 standard published at the order of Pope Pius XI.

Another aspect of feminine modesty is to not allow a “line of sight” inside a woman’s or a girl’s sleeve to expose to view her upper arm (or another part of her body which should not be exposed to view) when she lifts or extends her arm.

As shown above, a woman’s or girl’s sleeves should be loose-fitting – not too tight. But it is also important to avoid a “line-of-sight” up the sleeve. One way to do this is for the loose-fitting sleeve to have a fitted cuff which could have a button or a tuck at the end of the sleeve.

## **Feminine Modesty Applies to Young Girls as well as Older Girls and Women**

The standard ordered by Pope Pius XI was explicitly stated to apply to “young girls”<sup>21</sup> (as well as to older girls and to women).<sup>22</sup> Proper manners of conduct and dress should start when a child is very young. It is important to begin to train children early and to start instilling habits of modesty in them, as well as to give good example (*i.e.*, reinforce good habits in others who see those children).

Just as children can be taught even before they can speak, not to touch objects that their parents decide are “off-limits”, and not to “scream bloody murder” to get attention, likewise children can be taught how to dress and act modestly.

In reality, then, there should exist little if any difference between the way adults and children practice the virtue of modesty. The pictures of the three young children of Fatima illustrate this fact.

## **Modesty Standards Apply In *All* Activities – There is No “Sports or Swimming Exception”!**

Modesty standards (including regarding modest sleeves) do not change based on the activities in which the woman or girl is engaged. Catholic modesty does not have an exception for swimming or athletic pursuits. The same standard of modesty must be practiced at all times and in all places<sup>23</sup> since human nature is always the same and subject to the same temptations.

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<sup>21</sup> In the Italian version of this decree, the word for “young girls” is “giovanette”.

<sup>22</sup> September 24, 1928 standard published at the order of Pope Pius XI.

<sup>23</sup> Obviously, we are not referring to necessary activities undertaken in private related to proper hygiene.

For example, Pope Pius XI stated that it is better for girls and women to ***not even attend*** athletic events but, if they are forced to attend, then they must do so ***dressed completely modestly***. Here are his words:

Let parents keep their daughters away from public gymnastic games and contests; but if their daughters are ***compelled*** to attend such exhibitions, let them see that they are ***fully and modestly dressed***. **Let them never permit their daughters to don immodest garb.**<sup>24</sup>

This is obvious. How blunted and ruined would a girl's or woman's sense of modesty be if it were somehow acceptable for her to expose herself as long as she was engaged in certain activities! For example, it would be irrational to consider it acceptable for a girl or woman to be seen in a swimming suit as long as there is a pool or lake located nearby!

The same applies to other sports such as volleyball, tennis, running, horseback riding, and so on. In all such activities, females must take extra care to ensure their dress as well as all their bodily movements and postures will not violate Catholic modesty.

## **Six Additional Considerations Regarding the Catholic Standard of Modesty**

Please note the following six consequences that flow directly from the above Catholic requirements of *Marylike* modesty:

1. This standard is not declared to be the ideal, but rather is the ***minimum to avoid sin***. It certainly shows a spirit contrary to the love of God and to the love of virtue for any Catholic to try to “get as close as possible to sin without crossing the line into sin”. Thus, a *Marylike* spirit of modesty would not aim merely at these minimum modesty requirements as if they were the ideal.
2. Parents, especially fathers, have a duty to guide the women and girls under their care and enforce this Catholic standard of modesty. Here is one way in which Pope Pius XI declared the responsibility of parents for the modesty of their children:

Let parents ***never*** permit their daughters to don immodest garb.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> January 12, 1930 decree ordered by Pope Pius XI and issued by the Congregation of the Council, through its Prefect, Cardinal Sbarbetti (emphasis added).

<sup>25</sup> Quoted from #3 of the January 12, 1930 Directive issued by the Sacred Congregation of the Council at the order of Pope Pius XI.

3. Parents, especially mothers, have a duty to guide their daughters not only to comply with this *Marylike* sleeve standard (and all other aspects of modesty), but to **love modesty**. Mothers can do this especially by their own example.
4. Faithful and informed Catholics must avoid the scandal of complimenting or praising the appearance of anyone who is immodestly dressed.
5. Just as women and girls must wear modest sleeves, this same modesty standard also applies to photographs, paintings, and statues, whether the woman or girl who is depicted is known or unknown. Obviously, it would be illogical for a woman to carefully dress modestly herself but also to promote or display scandalous art on her wall (or scandalous pictures of her relatives hung with magnets on her refrigerator, *etc.*). For the very same reason that she is forbidden to dress this way, a Catholic is forbidden to promote or display such immodest images.
6. If we somehow come into possession of immodest garments (such as garments with immodest sleeves), we should not give them away or donate them, because then we would become an accomplice or accessory to someone else's sin of wearing them.<sup>26</sup>

## Objections Which Could Be Raised

One could suppose that there are six objections which could be made to the Catholic standard set forth above:

1. Standards have changed – laxer, modern modesty standards now apply. (This objection is closely related to the excuse that “everyone does it”.)
2. The standard given by Pope Pius XI is too extreme, too strict, or exaggerated.
3. “If anyone has a problem with the way I dress, he must have a dirty mind.”
4. Sleeves which fail Pope Pius XI's standard for modesty are “no big deal” and “I'm used to them”.
5. “But where I live it gets so hot in the summer! So, I need to wear sleeves which fail Pope Pius XI's standard for modesty in order to stay cool.”

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<sup>26</sup> One of many reasons for a woman or girl to become skilled in the art of sewing, is so that she can alter immodest garments, if feasible, to make them modest. For example, she could place a tuck at the end of a sleeve to prevent it from allowing a “line of sight” up the sleeve.

6. “I cannot find clothing which fulfills Pope Pius XI’s requirements. So I just do the best I can, and God will understand.”

Below, we examine each of these objections.

### 1. **Modesty Standards have Changed – Laxer, Modern Modesty Standards Now Apply.**

We live in pagan times. Let us beware of rationalizing immodesty by saying that this standard of *Marylike* modesty is old-fashioned and that we live in modern times where the requirements of modesty are weaker.

Here is one way that Pope Pius XII warns about allowing our modesty standards to weaken as society becomes more decadent:

[A] garment must not be evaluated according to the estimation of a decadent or already-corrupt society, but according to the aspirations of a society which prizes the dignity and seriousness of its public attire.<sup>27</sup>

So we should not take our cues regarding modesty from our godless, degenerate society which uses false, lax, modern modesty standards. Our Lady warned at Fatima about these immodest fashions of our times. Here are her words:

**Certain fashions will be introduced that will offend Our Lord very much.**

A variation of this claim (that modesty standards have weakened) is:

Do you know how badly the girls are dressing now? So even just my wearing a dress is good enough!

This false claim is the sin of moral relativism! It is the heresy of *Situation Ethics*. This error states that what is right and wrong changes based on the current conditions and what other people do. When others dress badly enough, this can allow me to change my own standards of modesty. But the truth is that modesty never changes because human nature never changes.

Here is how Pope Pius XII condemned this pernicious method of making decisions:

The distinctive mark of this morality [*i.e.*, *Situation Ethics*] is that it is in fact in no way based on universal moral laws, for instance, on the Ten Commandments, **but on the real and concrete conditions or circumstances in which one must**

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<sup>27</sup> Pope Pius XII, *Address to the Latin Union of High Fashion*, November 8, 1957.

*act*, and according to which the *individual conscience* has to judge and choose. This state of things is unique and valid only once for each human action. This is why the supporters of this ethics affirm that *the decision of one's conscience cannot be commanded by universal ideas, principles, and laws ....*"<sup>28</sup>

But at the Particular Judgment of each person, God will not "ask" how many people around us committed sin. Rather, He will "ask" us why *we* sinned.

## **2. The Standard Given by Pope Pius XI is Too Extreme, Too Strict, or Exaggerated.**

Calling Pope Pius XI's modesty standard "extreme" implies that the objector is unreceptive to the Catholic Standard of modesty (and not wanting to be different from the world). But we should make all efforts to please God, ignoring the sinful standards of the persons around us who are on the road to hell. As Pope Pius XII taught:

"Our Savior demands of us above all that we never consent to any sin, even internally, and that we *steadfastly remove far from us anything that can even slightly tarnish the beautiful virtue of purity. In this matter no diligence, no severity can be considered exaggerated.*"<sup>29</sup>

Let us understand that the world will always say that God's friends are "extreme" in their practice of virtue and in their filial fear of offending Him.

## **3. "If Anyone has a Problem with the Way I Dress, He Must Have a Dirty Mind."**

Another rationalization of a girl's or woman's immodesty (and attempt to deny culpability for the sins she causes in others by the way she dresses), is to say that if someone else is concerned about the way she dresses, it shows that there is a problem with that *other* person, not with herself. But the truth is just the opposite!

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<sup>28</sup> Quoted from *Acts of the Apostolic See*, 1952, pp 413-419 (emphasis added).

For a further explanation of the heresy of Situation Ethics in the context of Bishop Richard Williamson teaching this same pernicious error, read this article:  
<https://catholiccandle.neocities.org/priests/williamson-teaches-situation-ethics>

<sup>29</sup> *Sacra Virginitas*, by Pope Pius XII, March 25, 1954 (emphasis added).

Sensitivity to someone else's failure to dress modestly is a **good** sign in that sensitive person. Here is how Pope Pius XII teaches this truth:

Greater sensitivity to this warning against the snares of evil [of immodesty], far from being grounds for criticizing those who possess it, as though it were a sign of interior depravity, is actually a mark of an upright soul and of watchfulness over the passions.<sup>30</sup>

A person with a "dirty mind" is callous to the filth in his mind and is unaffected by additional filth entering it. But a man with a clean heart and mind is disturbed at the entrance of immodesty through the windows of his eyes, in a way which resembles the perturbation of a housewife at the prospect of a person wearing muddy shoes while walking on the clean white carpet in her home.

#### 4. **Sleeves which Fail Pope Pius XI's Standard for Modesty are "No Big Deal" and "I'm Used to Them".**

A woman or girl could say that wearing a sleeveless garment (or a garment with inadequate and immodest sleeves) is "no big deal" and that "I'm used to it".

But such an excuse merely shows that she has become used to sin and is contaminated by some moral taint. Here is Pope Pius XII's warning against this excuse:

The most insidious of sophisms, which are usually repeated to justify immodesty, seems to be the same everywhere. One of these resurrects the ancient saying "let there be no argument about things we are accustomed to", in order to brand as old-fashioned the rebellion of honest people against fashions which are too bold...<sup>31</sup>

We must take great care to **not** allow ourselves to become used to the immodesty that we see all around us. Instead, we should reflect that "more people go to hell because of sins of the flesh than for any other reason."<sup>32</sup>

One important way to develop a stronger sense of modesty (and to avoid becoming callous to the sin of immodesty) is to avoid as much as possible the frequent exposure to the

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<sup>30</sup> Pope Pius XII, *Address to the Latin Union of High Fashion*, November 8, 1957 (bracketed words added to show the context).

<sup>31</sup> Pope Pius XII, *Address to the Latin Union of High Fashion*, November 8, 1957.

<sup>32</sup> *The Whole Truth About Fatima*, Frere Michel de la Sante Trinite, Vol. II, Ch.4, Appendix II.

immodesty of others.

**5. “But where I live it gets so hot in the summer! So in order to stay cool, I need to wear sleeves which fail Pope Pius XI’s standard for modesty.”**

Hot weather is not a new phenomenon and summer is not a new invention. Throughout the history of mankind, women have dressed modestly, in womanly clothes, and stayed cool enough, even if the weather gave them the opportunity to practice patience and to offer up some discomfort.

We should reflect that our neighbor’s spiritual good is more important than our bodily comfort. Therefore, as St. Thomas Aquinas teaches, “as regards the welfare of the soul we ought to love our neighbor more than our own body.”<sup>33</sup>

**Even if we were to suppose that offering up the heat of summer out of love of God were somehow “heroic”, then this is a tiny bit of “heroism” that God expects us to practice.**

**6. “I cannot find clothing which fulfills Pope Pius XI’s requirements. So I just do the best I can, and God will understand.”**

At the heart of this excuse is the false claim that God fails to provide a way to avoid every sin. *The truth is that God always provides a way to be virtuous and do the right thing in every circumstance.* Of course, we may have to make more effort. We may have to give up certain pleasures or make certain sacrifices. But He will aid us.

In the case of finding modest clothing, it can be done if a woman/girl *truly puts virtue (especially modesty and charity) above all else.*

First, a woman or girl can wear a long sleeve blouse either with the sleeves down to her wrists or rolled up to her elbows.

Second, altering a blouse (to cut off long sleeves and hem them) does *not* require advanced seamstress skills, but only the basics. But, even if one does not know the basics of sewing (and plenty of women do not because they were never taught), then let them

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<sup>33</sup> *Summa*, IIa IIae, Q.26, a.5, *respondeo*.

prioritize learning those essentials over other matters. There are free videos available teaching the basics such as hems, cuffs, extending sleeves, and so on.

If one has no computer, then public libraries can provide books on the subject or obtain books through an interlibrary loan. It is generally quite easy to obtain free or very affordable fabric on which to practice sewing. Also, one can ask older, experienced women for help.

But if for whatever reason a woman cannot learn the basics of sewing, let her make the sacrifice of buying a few modest outfits and wearing them more frequently (regardless of what other people might think about the lack of variety), rather than sacrificing modesty for the sake of variety in her clothing.

### **Question: Was the Catholic Standard for Modest Sleeves Relaxed to Allow Quarter-Length Sleeves – that is, Sleeves Extending Only Half Way Between the Arm Pit and the Elbow?**

In articles published about modesty, it is common for authors to first quote Pope Pius XI's standard that feminine modesty requires sleeves to extend to the elbow at a minimum. But then, often, these authors add the following note:

Because of impossible market conditions, quarter-length sleeves are temporarily tolerated with Ecclesiastical Approval, until Christian womanhood again turns to Mary as the model of modesty in dressing.

**Question:** Is it true that this loosening of the modest sleeve standard is *really* allowed?

Below, we consider this question, considering that this standard is said to be loosened:

1. “with Ecclesiastical Approval”;
2. “temporarily”; and
3. “because of impossible market conditions”.

#### **1. Was the Standard for Modest Sleeves Loosened with “Ecclesiastical Approval”?**

If Pope Pius XI's modesty standard was overridden by “ecclesiastical authority”, *who* is this authority that could change the standard given by the pope himself?

In all of the many modesty articles we have read, no ecclesiastical authority is ever *identified* as the source of this loosening of the modesty standard of Catholic female

sleeve length. *Catholic Candle* carefully researched this question and sought the origin of that loosening of the minimum sleeve-length standard.

A number of articles published in the last fifty years **asserted** that Fr. Bernard A. Kunkel is the origin of the loosening of this Catholic standard. (Fr. Kunkel was a priest in the diocese of Belleville, Illinois, in the middle of the 1900s who founded a well-publicized worldwide crusade for *Marylike* modesty.) But *Catholic Candle* could not locate any proof for the claim that Fr. Kunkel was, in fact, the origin of that looser standard.

In Fr. Kunkel's own publications on modesty he does **state** that there is this loosening of the sleeve-length standard "with Ecclesiastical Approval". But he does not disclose **who** that ecclesiastical authority is that approved the dispensation.

*Catholic Candle* diligently searched and was unable to find anyone earlier than Fr. Kunkel who claimed there to be a dispensation from Pope Pius XI's minimum feminine modesty standard for sleeves.

Based on *Catholic Candle's* research, we **tentatively** believe that Fr. Kunkel received the permission from his own diocese's ordinary, Bishop Henry Althoff, to publish this loosened minimum sleeve standard. Bishop Althoff supported Fr. Kunkel's work and approved of his modesty crusade, including Fr. Kunkel's booklet which was called *The Marylike Modesty Handbook of the Purity Crusade of Mary Immaculate*.

Fr. Kunkel's principal booklet was published on December 8, 1944, with the *Nihil Obstat*, by Leonard A. Bauer, S.T.D., with the approval of Bishop Althoff. This "*Nihil Obstat*" declares on behalf of the bishop that there is nothing in this publication regarding *Marylike* modesty which is contrary to the Catholic Faith. So, apparently, Fr. Kunkel (likely, after discussing the matter with his bishop), stated that he had "ecclesiastical approval" – likely from his own bishop – to "temporarily" loosen the standard for sleeve-length modesty.

## **What Would Be the Effect of Bishop Althoff Approving the Loosening of the Sleeve-Length Modesty Standard?**

Whereas the pope has authority and jurisdiction over all Catholics worldwide, a bishop only has authority and only has the power to *bind and loose* those Catholics in his own diocese. Bishop Althoff was the bishop of Belleville, Illinois.

Further, even in his own diocese, a bishop does not have the authority to change the rulings of the pope in **all** things. But in those matters on which the bishop **does** have the authority to modify the pope's rulings, that modification applies only for his own diocese. Thus, it would seem that Bishop Althoff of Belleville did **not** have the authority to loosen

the standard of modesty for persons outside of his diocese – even assuming that he had this authority for his own flock.

## **This Loosening of the Sleeve-Length Modesty Standard was Purportedly Done “Temporarily” More than 80 Years Ago!**

Even if Bishop Althoff had authority to loosen the modesty standard for his own diocese, that occurred in 1944 – when Fr. Kunkel published this “approval” of the loosened standard. But this loosening was stated to be “temporary”. It is now more than 80 years later. Is that “temporary” measure still in effect? Did Bishop Althoff intend this “temporary” loosening to continue more than 80 years later?

## **What is Implied by the Statement that the Loosened Modesty Standard Is “Because of Impossible Market Conditions”?**

This purported justification for the loosened modesty standard is puzzling. The reference to “market conditions” seems to imply that women’s and girls’ garments with modest sleeves could not be purchased or were “impossible” to find for sale.

It would seem that, if it were hard to find blouses with elbow-length sleeves, it would be sensible for women and girls to sew their own blouses or to cut off full-length sleeves at the elbow (and hem them, as needed).

This puzzle is *all-the-more* bewildering because Fr. Kunkel’s note (quoted above) states that this loosening of the modesty standard extends “until Christian womanhood again turns to Mary as the model of modesty in dressing”.

### **So, which is it?**

- Was the standard (purportedly) loosened because modest garments could not be purchased?

or

- Was it because women have turned away from *Marylike* modesty?

If it is the second of these, then is this statement acknowledging that the standard was loosened because “Christian womanhood” ceased to follow the proper standard and no longer dressed modestly? If so, *since when* does the Catholic Church change Her moral standards on *anything* because Catholics do not obey? Again, Fr. Kunkel’s note is puzzling!

## Can a Minimum Modesty Standard be Further Reduced?

Pope Pius XI gave a modesty standard which is a minimum to avoid sin. It seems dubious that a minimum standard of modesty could be reduced to less than that minimum. In other words, *isn't a minimum, a minimum?* A minimum standard does not disappear simply because a decadent society ignores this standard (as Pope Pius XII points out above).

## The “Bottomline” About Fr. Kunkel’s and Bishop Althoff’s Temporary Loosening of the Modesty Standard

Although we assume all good intentions on the part of Fr. Kunkel and Bishop Althoff (who were apparently responsible for the claim that the modesty standard was “temporarily” loosened), it seems doubtful that this loosening ever applied anywhere outside of the diocese of Belleville, Illinois. Further, it seems even more certain that this loosened standard does not apply outside of Belleville now, 80 years later.

So it seems that prudent Catholics should simply follow the standard issued by Pope Pius XI.

## Conclusion of this Article

Feminine Modesty Pertains to Sleeves in Six Ways. Sleeves must:

1. Be long enough;
2. Not be made of a flesh-colored material (*i.e.*, a color creating the illusion of bare skin);
3. Not be made of transparent or “see-through” material;
4. Not be too tight;
5. Not be made of a fabric that is too supple or clingy; and
6. Not allow a “line of sight” up a woman’s or a girl’s arm inside her sleeve, above her elbow.

We live in pagan times. Just as a living organism only stays alive (*i.e.*, remains a **living** plant or animal), if it resists the corrupting influences (*e.g.*, of bacteria) which are all around it, likewise we must protect the life of our souls (which live the life of grace) by resisting the moral corruption of sin all around us.

Let us beware of rationalizing immodesty by saying that the standard of *Marylike* modesty is too old-fashioned and that we live in modern times where the requirements of modesty are weaker.

It is *Catholic Common Sense* that we should not adopt the dress or other practices of the anti-Christ revolution (including immodesty) no matter how many other people do so in our decadent times.<sup>34</sup>

Let us live our Catholic Faith! We need to devote ourselves to restoring all things in Christ! One important aspect of this is for women to dress modestly.

Catholic feminine modesty is a beautiful ornament of a good woman or girl. All of us – men and women – should love and appreciate this virtue!

Let women and girls love to always dress with *Marylike* modesty, including modest sleeves!

Let men and boys appreciate, admire, and defend women and girls who dress modestly!



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<sup>34</sup> For further analysis of the importance of not dressing like the revolutionaries around us, read this article: *We Should Not Dress Like Cultural Revolutionaries!* which is found at this link: <https://catholiccandle.org/2024/02/05/we-should-not-dress-like-cultural-revolutionaries/>