

Catholic Candle

☛ September 2026 ☛ catholiccandle.org ☛ catholiccandle@gmail.com

Words to Live By – From Catholic Tradition

Prayer of St. Thomas More, composed in the Tower of London while awaiting Execution:

Give me the grace, Good Lord, to set the world at naught, to set my mind fast upon Thee, not to hang upon the blasts of men's mouths, to be content to be solitary, not to long for worldly company, but utterly to cast off the world and to rid my mind of the business thereof.

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Catholic Candle note: The article below is Part XXVI of the study of the temperaments, starting with the Choleric temperament. Here are links to the first twenty-five 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/>

[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/>
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-choleric-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-choleric-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-choleric-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-choleric-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-choleric-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/>
22. 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: <https://catholiccandle.org/2026/05/28/about-the-temperaments-part-xxii-how-to-order-our-loves-so-we-can-use-the-passion-of-fear-properly/>
23. Part XXIII: Explanation of sloth in order to analyze this snare of Satan and to combat him: <https://catholiccandle.org/2026/06/26/about-the-temperaments-part-xxiii-explanation-of-sloth-in-order-to-analyze-this-snare-of-satan/>
24. Part XXIV: Explaining more about how the devil tries to draw us away from reasoning and from the things of God: <https://catholiccandle.org/2026/07/29/about-the-temperaments-part-xiv-how-the-devil-draws-us-away-from-reasoning-and-the-things-of-god/>
25. Part XXV – Explaining the Devil Attempts to Destroy Our Prayer-Life and How We Should Counterattack: <https://catholiccandle.org/2026/08/31/lesson-60-about-the-temperaments-part-xxv-the-devil-attempts-to-destroy-our-prayer-life/>

Mary's School of Sanctity

Lesson #61 – About the Temperaments, Part XXV – The Fight against Worldliness which is a Huge Detriment to a Deep Prayer Life

In our last lesson we saw how the devil sought to undermine and destroy St. Teresa of Avila's salvation. We saw how her worldliness weighed her down and hindered her desire to give herself completely to God. We will now apply this lesson to ourselves and search our souls to see if we are also inordinately attached to the world (as she had been, earlier in her life). Our worldly attachment can be determined primarily by our use of creatures (*i.e.*, all things created by God). Thus, it is important to examine our use of creatures.

Because worldly attachments draw us away from prayer and from God, we must avoid inordinate attachments to the world. In this lesson we will focus on the creatures that particularly draw our **minds** away from God, which imperceptibly also draw our hearts from God. However, before we delve into the use of creatures, let us remind ourselves of what Our Lord says about worldliness and keep His words in our mind as we consider our use of creatures.

Let Us Remember What Our Lord Says About Worldliness

Our Lord explained to His Apostles that they must be “in the world” but ***not*** “***of*** the world.” Praying to His Father, Our Lord says the following words:

I have given them Thy word, and the world hath hated them: because they are not of the world, as I also am not of the world.

I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from evil.

They are not of the world, as I also am not of the world.

St. John's Gospel, 17:14-16.

These precious words of Our Dear Lord should keep us focused on God's Will and on our Eternal Good, so that we make a thorough and sober examination of conscience concerning our use of creatures.

Our Use of Creatures – Including Time

St. Ignatius of Loyola explains in his *Spiritual Exercises* how creatures must be used to help us to attain our end, namely heaven.¹ But how do we know if something is detrimental to the attainment of our end?

We must weigh whether the object (*viz.*, the creature in question) distracts us from God and from the proper service and love that we owe to God. To help us to conduct this careful weighing, let us consider how we use **time**, which itself is a creature.

Our Lord alludes to the proper use of time when He warned His Apostles that we will be judged on every idle word.

But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall render an account for it on the Day of Judgment.

St. Matthew's Gospel, 12:36.

Fr. Martin von Cochem, in his book *The Four Last Things*, expands this consideration further when he says:

If it is so hateful to a criminal to be brought before an earthly magistrate, well may the poor soul quake with fear when she [meaning the soul²] is introduced into the presence of God, the strict and omniscient Judge, and required to give the most

¹ In his explanation of the *Principle and Foundation*, St. Ignatius tells us how we should use creatures only as a means to reach our spiritual end. Here are his words:

All other things on the face of the earth are created for man to help him fulfill the end for which he is created. From this it follows that man is to use these things to the extent that they will help him to attain his end. Likewise, he must rid himself of them in so far as they prevent him from attaining it.

Therefore, we must make ourselves indifferent to all created things, in so far as it is left to the choice of our free will and is not forbidden. Acting accordingly, for our part, we should not prefer health to sickness, riches to poverty, honor to dishonor, a long life to a short one, and so in all things we should desire and choose only those things which will best help attain the end for which we are created.

See the *Catholic Candle* article about the *Principle and Foundation* which is discussed in *Mary's School of Sanctity*, Lesson #11, which is found here: <https://catholiccandle.org/2022/06/27/lesson-11-the-principle-and-foundation-part-ii/>

² The Latin word for soul is “anima”, which is a feminine noun, and therefore this noun is sometimes given a feminine pronoun.

accurate account of all of the thoughts, words, deeds, and omissions of her past life.³

With these quotes in mind, let us investigate the tactics of the devil to tempt us to be worldly, waste time, and **not** to use our intellects.

As we discussed recently in our lessons, the things that the devil especially does not want us to focus on are:

- ❖ Filial love towards God;
- ❖ Deep and careful thinking;
- ❖ Knowledge of God;
- ❖ Knowledge of ourselves; and
- ❖ The purpose for which we were created.

Therefore, the devil presents his allurements to our souls principally to obstruct these five focuses.

The Devil First Attacks the Intellect of Man

In striving to wreak the greatest destruction upon man, the devil seeks first to attack man's ability to reason. For in doing this, the devil can easily conquer the soul of the man by destroying his focus on the other four areas listed immediately above. As we explained in a recent lesson,⁴ the devil first tries to distract man in order to hinder him from a life of prayer. Below, we discuss this further.

³ This quote is taken from Fr. Martin von Cochem's book *The Last Four Things* ©1899 by Benzinger Brothers, p.27 (bracketed words added for clarity).

⁴ Read about this here: *Mary's School of Sanctity – Lesson #60 – About the Temperaments – Part XXV – The Devil Attempts to Destroy Our Prayer-Life. How Should We Counterattack?:* <https://catholiccandle.org/2026/08/31/lesson-60-about-the-temperaments-part-xxv-the-devil-attempts-to-destroy-our-prayer-life/>

Distractions of Our Minds

The devil uses creatures which distract our minds and prevent us from developing a desire to think deeply. He wants this desire to be weak in us or, better yet, to be entirely absent from us.

He also tries to make us worldly by tempting us to put ourselves and other interests ahead of God – that is, have false gods before God.

Satan wants us to focus on this world and its problems, activities, and allurements, instead of submitting our wills and our lives to God. He wants us to be distracted with the concerns of this world – whether fables such as manmade climate change, or simply seeing the evils all around us, the devil wants us to be so worried about anything **except** our salvation. He certainly doesn't want us to trust in God and to turn to Him in prayer.

He wants us to waste time, especially with entertaining ourselves. He wants man to lead a life of dissipation. Thus, the devil doesn't want anyone to ever use his God-given intellect.

The Gadgets – the Tools of Satan

For decades the devil has used technology and promoted gadgets that are effective tools to lure souls away from God. One could say that the start of many moral perils was the motion picture. After the advent of movies, then came television. Television was fashioned into a highly effective means to corrupt society. What a great many souls have been corrupted by these tools! This corruption came in the form of:

- ✓ Indoctrination with lies – both explicit and implied;
- ✓ Promotion of worldliness;
- ✓ Promotion of covetousness and envy;
- ✓ Promotion of immodesty and impurity;
- ✓ Promotion of ***passively received*** sights and sounds which are not filtered by our intellect; and
- ✓ All the while squandering huge amounts of our time.

Then came a more recent gadget: a very portable cellular phone which the devil mockingly (and ironically) inspired to be named “the smart phone”. This tool encourages modern man to **not** use his intellect and instead to blindly believe whatever he sees and hears on this gadget. This gadget contains all of the dangers of television and many more

– all in a device small enough to allow a person to carry it easily and to engage in these evils everywhere he goes.

When one considers all of the ramifications of having and using this gadget often, one can readily see how this tool of Satan is a masterful stroke to sweep souls into hell. From pornography to satisfying one's idle curiosity – all readily accessible at one's fingertips. This so-called “smart phone” is a classic trap of Satan!

Adding further evil, the devil presents this gadget as a status symbol. It is widely implied in society that one is “strange” if one does not use a so-called “smart phone” – and indeed, if that device is not a newer-model one. Thus, having a so-called “smart phone” can be a temptation to envy and to pride (unreasonable human respect) because the pressure is so strong to follow the crowd. People do not want this latest fad to leave them behind.

The fact that the world promotes these so-called “smart phones” for use everywhere and for all types of transactions and interactions, shows the devil's influence is behind this gadget. There is hardly any place one can go without seeing people immersed in their phones. The devil's servants push so heavily the impression that no one can “get by” without having one of these phones, that our times seems almost apocalyptic.⁵

These so-called “smart phones” certainly promote the spirit of the world and direct users to the pool (or we could say “cesspool”) of information tainted and twisted to match the prince of this world, namely Satan. What should a person do if he has one of these phones? He should do what would please Our Lord. He should avoid having one of them by trying to retain a land-line even if it is more expensive. If one has a cellular phone, it would be best to try to **not** get the latest fad or status phone but instead to be poor-in-spirit and **not** be like everyone else.

Also, it would be best to ***use the phone very sparingly – rarely, even.*** Let us look at what St. Bonaventure says when he is addressing the obstacles to the prayer of contemplation. He explains how St. Bernard of Clairvaux describes the fourth obstacle to contemplation as “the phantoms of corporeal images.” St. Bonaventure says,

This last [meaning the fourth obstacle to contemplation] is more difficult to overcome than the others [*viz.*, barriers to contemplation], and therefore solitude is especially recommended in contemplation. It behoveth the man who contemplates

⁵ Compare this current state of things to the prophesy in the *Apocalypse*, 13:16-17:

[The Beast] shall make all, both little and great, rich and poor, freemen and

bondmen, to ***have a character in their right hand***, or on their foreheads. And that ***no man might buy or sell, but he that hath the character***, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

to be in some sense dumb, deaf, and blind so that seeing he may not see, and hearing he may not hear, nor take delight in talking; that is, that he may be so withdrawn from transitory things, and so united to God, that he may not, by hearing, seeing, speaking, cease to contemplate, but that he may avoid interruption as much as possible. And if necessity obliges him to break off [from his prayer], he must not lay up in the soul those images of things which have passed through its windows.⁶

If St. Bonaventure could say this of the distractions of simple everyday discourse with one's fellow man, how much more he would say if he saw man's modern technological gadgetry. Furthermore, if one considers the nature of the so-called "smart phone", where what one hears and sees on this phone is passively absorbed by the mind, and these images on the screen are constantly flashing from one thing to the next, it is easy to understand how this is disruptive to one's ability to concentrate.

All of this, likewise, harms one's ability to focus on his prayers and fight the distractions of all that he has seen and heard. Hence, the use of the so-called "smart phone" is **not** conducive to the soul's ability to focus on heavenly things and a deep prayer life. Instead, it distracts and agitates the soul, making it more difficult to settle down into the proper frame of mind to ponder and pour out one's heart to God. One could also see that the degree of this dissipation one experiences corresponds to the degree in which the will is weakened in its efforts to serve God.

When the mind has been engaged in worldly matters and the allurements of the senses, one is less apt to desire to engage in mental work (including spiritual work). The devil can take advantage of the wounds of Original Sin and can easily tempt a person to believe that intellectual work is so tedious and difficult that he will think that mental work is such a "chore" or a "plague."

We can see this attitude in the world around us where most people do not desire to think carefully or to think independently of the world. Many simply spend hours mentally loitering, frittering away their day on their so-called "smart phone." How often do we find that when we ask someone a question, he immediately pulls out his so-called "smart phone" to find the answer? He'd rather trust a worldly gadget than his own intelligence. In conclusion, it seems prudent to be **very** leery of this modern thought-blocking gadget.

⁶ Quote taken from St. Bonaventure's work *On the Life of Our Lord*, chapter 56 (bracketed words added for clarity).

One Can Do a Simple Examination of Conscience to See His Attachment to This Gadget:

- How often do I use this phone?
- How long am I on this phone during a single use?
- Do I ever just leave the phone behind and go about my day?
- Do I find that I have it with me all day?
- Do I have it at my bedside at night?
- Do I check my phone as soon as I awaken in the morning?
- Do I use my phone in bed?
- Has my phone been a source of past sins?
- Does it interrupt my family or social interactions?
- Do I quickly get onto my phone when I have a “spare minute”?
- Has this phone really become a strange god before God?

Some Tips on How to Treat a So-Called “Smart Phone”:

- † Never use the phone without real need.
- † Never use the phone for entertainment.
- † Never use the phone for social media.
- † Never use the phone for “window shopping.”
- † Before using a “smart phone”, ask yourself what you ***specifically*** need to accomplish on the phone. Do this task and get off of it. Do not expand the scope of your original reason for using the phone.
- † Never forget that the devil’s minions use this tool to keep track of and indoctrinate society.

As one weans himself off of his so-called “smart phone”, a person discovers that he has a new freedom. In this way one can see that the “smart phone” really makes one a slave to a mere creature.

It is Important to Test Ourselves to See How Attached We Are to Objects, that is, to Creatures:

One can ask himself questions similar to the ones regarding the “smart phone” and substitute another object in its place. If one finds he is inordinately attached to any object or person, he should pray to Our Lord to help him to detach himself and to order this creature and all creatures to God and to our final end. As St. Ignatius teaches, we must be indifferent to all objects and persons “*in so far as it is left to the choice of our free will and is not forbidden*”.

The simple rule-of-thumb to test our attachment to an object, *i.e.*, to a creature, is to recall these words of Our Lord:

For what doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his own soul? Or what exchange shall a man give for his soul?”

St. Matthew’s Gospel, 16:26.

We should ask ourselves who **really** comes first with us, God or a creature? Do our actions and habits show this? Here is a strong sign: what comes first with us and what we love most, tends to be what we seek to spend our time with, when we are able to do so.

In Conclusion:

This self-awareness of our use of creatures is extremely important in fostering a healthy prayer life and Divine Friendship. Also, God put it in man’s nature for him to take the greatest delight in using his highest faculty (*viz.*, his intellect). This should be a great incentive to improve our minds as well as to avoid all worldly dissipations. These dissipations and the creatures that foster them must be avoided if we are to have the degree of Divine Friendship that the Good Lord wills for us to have with Him.

A Preview...

Having considered how the devil tries to destroy our desire and likewise our delight in using our intellects, in our next lesson, we can concentrate on how the devil lures us to bodily pleasures, concerns, and desires as a means to draw us away from God and from a

life of prayer.



Conciliar Betrayal of the Mystical Body of Christ

The Conciliar Hierarchy's Removal of Fasting Obligations

When one compares obligatory pre-Vatican II Church discipline to the laxity after Vatican II, we recognize a main cause of the utter destruction of Catholics' spiritual and moral strength which the previous Church disciplines had engendered.

Some of the *Catholic Candle* Team had the opportunity to read Pope St. Leo the Great's sermons regarding the *September Ember Days*⁷ and were struck by the wisdom of his edifying admonition to keep *well* the Ember Days.

⁷ The 1917 Catholic Encyclopedia explains:

Ember days (corruption from Lat. *Quatuor Tempora*, four times) are the days at the beginning of the seasons ordered by the Church as days of fast and abstinence. They were definitely arranged and prescribed for the entire Church by Pope Gregory VII (1073-1085) for the Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday after 13 December (S. Lucia), after Ash Wednesday, after Whitsunday, and after 14 September (Exaltation of the Cross). The purpose of their introduction, besides the general one intended by all prayer and fasting, was to thank God for the gifts of nature, to teach men to make use of them in moderation, and to assist the needy. The immediate occasion was the practice of the heathens of Rome. The Romans were originally given to agriculture, and their native gods belonged to the same class. At the beginning of the time for seeding and harvesting religious ceremonies were performed to implore the help of their deities: in June for a bountiful harvest, in September for a rich vintage, and in December for the seeding; hence their *feriae sementivae*, *feriae messis*, and *feri vindimiales*. The Church, when converting heathen nations, has always tried to sanctify any practices which could be utilized for a good purpose. At first the Church in Rome had fasts in June, September, and December; the exact days were not fixed but were announced by the priests. The "*Liber Pontificalis*" ascribes to Pope Callistus (217-222) a law ordering the fast, but probably it is older. Leo the Great (440-461) considers it an Apostolic institution. When the fourth season was added cannot be ascertained, but Gelasius (492-496) speaks of all four. This pope also permitted the conferring of priesthood and deaconship on the Saturdays of ember week--these were formerly given only at Easter. Before Gelasius the ember days were known

[Footnote continued on the next page.]

Pope St. Leo the Great, a Doctor of the Church,⁸ expounded on the Church's beautiful benefits and the important symbolism of having its members keep these appointed fasts together. He makes several forceful arguments why the faithful should fast on common appointed days.

1. Pope St. Leo the Great tells us that, because man has the wounds of original sin, he is greatly benefitted by wholesome fasting. In other words, fasting is a **necessary** remedy for man, wounded as he is by Original Sin and his actual sins.
2. St. Leo says that public services (such as this fasting) are of a higher character than private ones. Here is his explanation:

The fast which the whole Church undergoes leaves out no one from the general purification, and God's people then become strongest when the hearts of all the faithful meet together in one common act of holy obedience⁹ when, in the camp

[Footnote continued from the previous page.]

only in Rome, but after his time their observance spread. They were brought into England by St. Augustine; into Gaul and Germany by the Carlovingians. Spain adopted them with the Roman Liturgy in the eleventh century. They were introduced by St. Charles Borromeo into Milan. The Eastern Church does not know them. The present Roman Missal, in the formulary for the Ember days, retains in part the old practice of lessons from Scripture in addition to the ordinary two: for the Wednesdays three, for the Saturdays six, and seven for the Saturday in December. Some of these lessons contain promises of a bountiful harvest for those that serve God.

⁸ He is also referred to as Pope St. Leo I. He reigned from 440 to 461 A.D.

⁹ Notice that Pope St. Leo puts the greater focus on the **obedience** of this public fast rather than the **bodily mortification** of it. This is because the most important element of fasting (when we fast according to the Church's rules and schedule rather than at times of our own choosing), is that we are **obeying** and are being directed by the Church's commandment, not by our own will and preference.

Even in our times of infidelity and laxness, we can still benefit from this element of obedience (in some way) when we fast on the traditional days of fasting **because** they were chosen by the Church, not by us, so that we submit our will to the Church's traditional directives.

This submission of our will is a greater sacrifice than the sacrifice of the food itself which we deny to our bodies, because our submission of our higher power (our will) is a greater sacrifice than is the submission of our lower nature (*viz.*, our body) when we choose our own days on which to undertake a private fast.

[Footnote continued on the next page.]

of the Christian army, there is on all sides, the same making ready for the fight and for defense. Though the cruel enemy rages in restless fury, and spreads all around his hidden snares, yet he will be able to catch no one and wound no one, if he finds no one off his guard, no one given up to sloth, no one inactive in works of piety.

3. This *faithful* and blessed Leo tells us that the September fast calls us in this public way to self-amendment, “that we may lift our souls to the Lord free from worldly cares and earthly concerns”. St. Leo continues:

Let us at least on these days, which are most healthfully ordained for our correction, withdraw ourselves from worldly occupation, and steal a little time for promoting our eternal welfare. ... And the fullest abolition of sins is obtained when the whole Church offers up one prayer and one confession. For if the Lord has promised fulfillment of all they shall ask, to the holy and devout agreement of two or three, what shall be denied to many thousands of the people who unite in one act of worship, and with one breath make their common supplication?

4. This Great Doctor adds that the community of goods and actions is most precious in God’s sight:

It is a great and very precious thing in the Lord’s sight, beloved, when Christ’s whole people engage together in the same duties, and all ranks and degrees of either sex co-operate with the same intent: when one purpose animates all alike to declining from evil and doing good; when God is glorified in the works of His slaves, and the Author of all godliness is blessed in unstinted giving of thanks.

Quoting Scripture, Pope St. Leo tells us:

“Be holy, for I am holy”. That is to say: choose Me and keep from what displeases Me. Do what I love, love what I do. If what I order seems difficult, come back to Me Who order, so, from where the command was given, help might be offered. I, Who furnished the desire, will not refuse support. Fast from contradiction, abstain

[Footnote continued from the previous page.]

Thus, the unfaithful post-conciliar hierarchy harmed Catholics by removing the fasting requirements because (predictably) most Catholics will not fast if they are not required to do so. But even worse is the harm these conciliar hirelings inflicted by removing Catholics’ exercise of virtue and the merit of the obedience by following the Church’s specific fasting requirements.

from opposition. Let Me be your food and drink. None desire in vain what is Mine, for those who stretch out toward Me seek Me because I first sought them.

Thus, St. Leo exhorts his flock as follows:

The four seasons of the year have their allotted time for that same observance of restraint. We continue to know, as the course of the whole year returns, that we are unceasingly in need of purification.

Pope St. Leo is plain in his instruction that we need to do penance for the salvation of our souls. Contrast this with the modern conciliar church which simply strikes from the ecclesiastical law almost all fasting requirements. The post-conciliar hierarchy has betrayed the flock by disregarding what is so crucial for salvation. They contradict what Our Lord said was required to obtain everlasting life. “Unless you do penance, you shall likewise perish.”

The modernists have disregarded the Ember Days and virtually abolished Lenten Fasting, keeping only Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. The devil knows well that he has won a major victory, working by means of his tools – the conciliar hierarchy!

Let us strive to always strictly keep the old rules for fasting and offer up this sacrifice for the restoration of all things in Christ. This is not the time to do only the minimum of penance! Use the pre-Vatican II rules for fasting and abstinence which are found here: <https://catholiccandle.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/Traditional-Rules-for-Fast-Abstinence.pdf>

Let us not be stingy with God! He is never outdone in generosity!



Catholic Candle* note:** *Catholic Candle* normally examines particular issues thoroughly, at length, using the teachings of St. Thomas Aquinas and the other Doctors of the Church. By contrast, our feature ***CC in Brief, usually gives an extremely short answer to a reader’s question. We invite every reader to submit his own questions.

CC in Brief

Making Donations During Our Time of Great Apostasy

Q. The [Church’s] commandment to contribute to the support of the Church is somewhat challenging, bearing in mind the current situation in the human element of the Church. Any suggestions on where to direct such support?

A. Good question, regarding contributing to the support the Church! The first thing to keep in mind is to make sure that you **do no harm**. Do **not** contribute to any compromise group under a misplaced desire to “contribute somewhere” or to donate to the “least bad” group available! Compromise priest and groups are not doing God’s work!

Further, do not contribute to a group that does both good work and also evil, under the rationalization that you are donating to that group “for the good part of the work they do”.

Your donation money is God’s money. Of course, everything we have belongs to God and we are His stewards of whatever He chose to give us out of His largess. He does not need us or our donations in order to accomplish His work. He can easily do everything He wants to do without us. But He wants us to donate to His causes because it is good for us to serve Him in this way.

We recommend that you make sure you always give **wisely**. Give alms to the needy who are truly **needy**. Here is an example of persons who do not seem to be truly needy: One of the *Catholic Candle* Team works in a large city’s business district. He sees beggars near the train station every day who, after rush hour (*i.e.*, when most people are gone), are sitting on the sidewalk smoking and texting on their cell phone that had been hidden. Considering further, that most beggars have access to the state’s myriad government “social services” programs and welfare freebies, it would seem that such beggars are not the best recipients of our alms.

Regarding our giving alms to the truly needy: one example is that we recently became aware of a newly-widowed woman, the mother of a Catholic family with dependent children. Although, of course, we want to do good to everyone, we should especially want to help Catholics, following St. Paul’s teaching: “let us work good to all men, but especially to those who are of the household of the Faith.”. *Galatians*, 6:10.

The **truly needy** include, most of all, those with great spiritual need. There is such great spiritual need now! Although we want to relieve bodily needs as well as spiritual needs, it would be infinitely better for one person to save his soul by means of spiritual alms than a hundred people to have their bodily needs met if they were still to lose their souls. So all alms prudently given are great but alms which do important spiritual good are best.

Give away rosaries to those who are interested, along with information on how to pray the rosary. Give away Catholic books, Traditional Catholic Missals, *etc.* But do this **wisely**. Give them to those persons whom you think are interested and will really use them or read them. A woman on the *Catholic Candle* Team intentionally strikes-up friendly conversations with modestly-dressed women when she sees them at the grocery store, to see if they are interested in the Truth. When she finds one that is, she sees how she might help.

Another idea starts with the observation that, when an uncompromising priest becomes available to us in the future, he will need financial help to do the most good. So this idea is that, by setting aside money now (as appropriate) to place yourself in a position to assist God's work by supporting such an uncompromising priest when God sends him to us. For example, in the past, when God sent us a then-uncompromising priest, there existed an uncompromising Catholic charity which paid for all of his plane tickets to fly around the country and other parts of the world to bring the uncompromising Mass, Sacraments and True Faith to the people. We think that a similar time will come again in the future and we should try to be ready to help financially (as well as in other ways). Thus, creating such a fund and giving funds to it as you are able, would in our opinion, be considered alms in God's eyes (assuming a person is honest with himself that he is not simply keeping the money for himself).

But rather than creating one's own fund, you should know that that the particular uncompromising Catholic charity referred to above still exists (and is a tax-deductible public charity under IRS regulation 501(c)(3)). You can still contribute to it if you wish. Some members of the *Catholic Candle* Team are connected with that charity but, of course, do not receive any of the money themselves. Everyone working for that charity volunteers and donates his time and receives no salary or payment of any type. That public charity is called *Traditional Catholic Religious Life, Inc.* But that charity does not currently have any priests to support because they have no access to, or information about, any uncompromising priests. Please contact *Catholic Candle* at CatholicCandle@gmail.com if you are interested in donating.



***Catholic Candle* note:** Below is part 10 of our exploration of the best type of education – which is a true *Catholic Liberal Education*. Do not confuse this education with many university programs called “liberal arts” but which are full of fluff, falsehood, and aimless so-called “cultural enrichment” courses and “humanities”.

A liberal education also does not refer to liberalism, nor is a true liberal education an indoctrination into that error of liberalism or *political correctness*. In fact, a true *Catholic Liberal Education* is the best antidote to the errors of liberalism.

As context for this tenth part of this article, let us recall what we saw in the earlier nine parts:

Previously, *in part 1 of this article*,¹⁰ we examined the problems we see in modern education:

- Modern colleges do not improve the quality of their students' minds (and their thinking ability) much or at all.
- Most “education” is merely job training, fluff courses, and/or leftist indoctrination.
- The students are trained to sound like someone in their field but they do more memorizing and little thinking.
- Grade “inflation” and degree “inflation” are rampant. Grades and academic degrees do not mean much anymore.

In part 2 of this article,¹¹ we examined, in general, what education is. We considered the human soul and the perfection of its highest faculty (*i.e.*, its highest power) – which is the intellect – and which is immaterial (*i.e.*, incorporeal). We saw that our intellects are perfected through knowing eternal, unchangeable truths and the causes of things.

In part 3 of this article,¹² after having seen what true education is, we examined the question *who should perfect his intellect*.

In part 4 of this article,¹³ having seen that modern universities do not provide a true education, we consider whether there is *ever* a good reason for men or women to attend them.

In part 5 of this article,¹⁴ having seen that women and girls should pursue a True Catholic Liberal Education – just as men and boys should, too – we then considered what the best environment is in which women and girls should do this.

¹⁰ Part 1 of this article can be found here: <https://catholiccandle.org/2025/06/28/the-blessings-of-a-true-catholic-liberal-education/>

¹¹ Part 2 of this article can be found here: <https://catholiccandle.org/2025/07/24/the-blessing-of-a-true-catholic-liberal-education-part-ii/>

¹² Part 3 of this article can be found here: <https://catholiccandle.org/2025/08/28/the-blessing-of-a-true-catholic-liberal-education-part-iii/>

¹³ Part 4 of this article can be found here: <https://catholiccandle.org/2025/09/24/the-blessing-of-a-true-catholic-liberal-education-part-iv/>

¹⁴ Part 5 of this article can be found here: <https://catholiccandle.org/2025/10/26/the-blessing-of-a-true-catholic-liberal-education-part-v/>

In part 6 of this article, we addressed the objection that, having seen the great value of a true *Catholic Liberal Education*, we should be afraid that the great blessing of this education would be a danger to our souls because it might foster in us the vice of pride.¹⁵

In part 7 of this article, we considered more fully the difference between the education which is appropriate for a free man as contrasted to the education which is appropriate for a slave.¹⁶

In part 8 of this article, we considered further how the truth perfects our minds. This shows us that we must really *know* the truth, not merely believe true opinions.¹⁷

In part 9 of this article, we considered more-specifically what studies (sciences) belong in a Catholic Liberal Education.¹⁸

In part 10, we explore the motive and the goal of a true *Catholic Liberal Education*. A Catholic Liberal Education Begins in Wonder and Aims at Wisdom.¹⁹

Below, in part eleven, we consider what authors and books we should use in our Catholic Liberal Education.

What Authors and Books Should We Use in Our Catholic Liberal Education?

Part 11

In our recent consideration of wisdom, we saw *what* wisdom is and that it is a priceless gift from God. We saw that the highest truths and wisdom perfect our highest faculty – *viz.*, our intellect.

¹⁵ Part 6 of this article can be found here: <https://catholiccandle.org/2026/01/26/3129/>

¹⁶ Part 7 of this article can be found here: <https://catholiccandle.org/2026/02/26/the-blessing-of-a-true-catholic-liberal-education-part-vii/>

¹⁷ Part 8 of this article can be found here: <https://catholiccandle.org/2026/03/10/the-blessing-of-a-true-catholic-liberal-education-part-viii/>

¹⁸ Part 9 of this article can be found here: <https://catholiccandle.org/2026/06/26/the-blessing-of-a-true-catholic-liberal-education-part-viii-2/>

¹⁹ <https://catholiccandle.org/2026/08/31/the-blessing-of-a-true-catholic-liberal-education-part-x/>

But which *specific* books and authors should we read when studying the various sciences of a genuine *Catholic Liberal Education*? There are many authors of many books written on the subjects (e.g., geometry) which we should study in a *Catholic Liberal Education*. Which ones are the best books and authors for us to use in these studies?

In our pursuit of the greatest truths about the objective order established by God, we should use the original writings of the greatest thinkers – who wrote in the Western intellectual tradition which is the foundation and flowering of Christendom. These works must be read not primarily for historical or cultural reasons, but because they are the most successful attempts to understand things as they are in themselves, while attending to our common experience.²⁰

Generally, these works are called the *Great Books of the Western World*. Here are a few examples of these *Great Books*: Euclid's Elements (the greatest work of geometry), and many works by St. Augustine, Aristotle, St. Thomas Aquinas, Fr. Gregory Mendel, Archimedes, and J. Henri Fabre (as well as many other authors).

We should read these *Great Books* seeking to understand the greatest truths of reality. These books should not be the **object** of study. The object of study should be the **truths themselves** examined in those books.

Nor should we read the *Great Books* in order to learn the **opinions** of those authors but rather to know what the **truth** is, weighing and examining what those books say, in order to consider their arguments and explanations and thereby come to the **truth**.

The **opinions** of even the great authors are not so important. That is why St. Thomas Aquinas, the greatest of all Doctors of the Church and all other thinkers, rightly teaches that arguments based on human authority are the weakest type of argument and are weaker than arguments based on reason.²¹ (However, in contrast to arguments based on *human* authority, arguments based on God's own authority, are the strongest arguments.)²²

It is the **truth** that is important. So, for example, if we are studying *What Time is*, the fruit of our study should not be concluding that "**In Aristotle's opinion**, Time is the measure of motion". Rather, by considering Aristotle's arguments and explanations, the fruit of our study should be the better understanding of the **reality** of what Time is (not merely an author's opinion).

²⁰ This *common experience* is the common truths which are the principles of all knowledge and science. Read more about this in part 8 of this article on a Catholic Liberal Education. Part 8 can be found here: *Making the Truth "Our Own"*, <https://catholiccandle.org/2026/03/10/the-blessing-of-a-true-catholic-liberal-education-part-viii/>

²¹ *Summa*, Ia, Q.1, a.8, ad 2.

²² *Summa*, Ia, Q.1, a.8, ad 2.

Further, students should not read these Great Books as “*Humanities*”, *i.e.*, as outstanding examples of the creativity of the human mind, although these books are certainly that.

Likewise, students should not read these books to become acquainted with our *Cultural Heritage*, and the refinement of our *Western Civilization* (as valuable as that is).

Rather, students should read the *Great Books* because, more than any other works, when studied under the light and guidance of the teachings of the True Catholic Church, these books can open up our minds to the truth about reality.

There are four reasons for this:

- ❖ The *Great Books* are the most accessible works for the matters they treat, given the difficulty which is inherent in the matters themselves. For example, understanding what motion is or understanding the Blessed Trinity contains inherent difficulties which cannot all be “simplified away”.²³
- ❖ The *Great Books* have withstood the test of time. Many generations from now, Euclid will still be esteemed as the greatest of all geometers, whereas the authors of the modern geometry books will all be forgotten.
- ❖ The *Great Books* are shown superior by their effect – because they have convinced the world of their ideas. When an author convinces the world of his ideas and arguments – in the face of the world’s prior, contrary beliefs – that feat shows the book’s greater persuasiveness and intrinsic power as compared to a lesser author who merely writes his text book in the “tradition” of a *Great Book* (such as the countless math books claiming to be “Euclidean Geometry”).
- ❖ The *Great Books* help us to avoid being overly-influenced by the prejudices of our time. People blindly assume the errors of our age, *e.g.*, ecumenism and evolution.

²³ The **undiscerning** student might suppose that, on a topic such as proving God’s existence, some modern text book authors (*e.g.*, Msgr. Paul Glenn or Garrigou-Lagrange) are clearer and better than St. Thomas. But that student fails to notice that those modern authors often “cheat” their readers by supporting their statements using only an example in place of St. Thomas’s own universal arguments which really **prove** those same statements.

But a **careful** thinker understands that giving an **example** does not prove the truth of a universal statement. Consider that finding a single example of a tall Eskimo does not prove that all Eskimos are tall. If Msgr. Glenn’s treatments were truly better than that of St. Thomas, then Msgr. Glenn would be the Doctor of the Church, not St. Thomas.

Similarly, in mathematics, the physical sciences, logic, and many other sciences, the modern non-great authors often dodge the difficult arguments and use an example instead, to “prove” their point. This *dodging the difficult* is a great loss for the student.

The *Great Books* are from prior ages unaffected by the current age which blindly assumes the correctness of positions which are currently in vogue. The *Great Books* help us to “step outside” our time and to better see its errors and the weaknesses of current fads and transitory “orthodoxies”.

Perhaps some people, moved by misplaced humility, fear going to the authors of the *Great Books* because those people think those works are only for scholars, not for ordinary people like ourselves. But that notion is false. These works are great because they **are** so accessible and are the simplest treatment of those ideas, given the inherent difficulty of the matters themselves.

St. Thomas Aquinas is the greatest of all thinkers. His brilliance surpasses all others, in large part, because he excels all others at unlocking the most difficult truths for **all** of us – laymen included. It is a mistake to suppose that he is too great to be read by “pea brains” like us and so we should instead read the books written by some more recent, lesser authors.

In other words, the great authors are so great that they are accessible even to **us ordinary people!**²⁴ Here is how Archbishop Lefebvre explained this truth:

²⁴ It might be that now, for the first time, some readers understand that we all have a duty to perfect our minds, especially to study our Holy Catholic Faith. But some of these readers will already be emersed in many essential duties of state which prevent them, at least for now, from dedicating more than small “snippets” of time to this important work. Well, each person should do **what** he can do and **as much as** he can do in the circumstances in which God placed him.

As explained in the ninth part of this article on the *Great Blessings of a Catholic Liberal Education*, it is best that students not begin their studies with the highest truths (philosophy and theology), but rather, approach them through studying the seven liberal arts first. <https://catholiccandle.org/2026/06/10/the-blessing-of-a-true-catholic-liberal-education-part-ix/> This approach will give the best results of deepest and most lasting understanding.

Further, St. Thomas Aquinas explains in the prologue to the *Summa Theologica* that the *Summa* is for **beginners** in theology. But St. Thomas anticipated that this beginner would already be somewhat adept in the various parts of philosophy. Thus, we see that there is a proper order of studies and of learning: the liberal arts first, then various branches of philosophy and then theology.

But suppose that a person’s duties of state do not currently allow this better approach? We urge each reader to start without delay and do what he can do with the time and the books that he has or which are reasonably available to him. It is better to start and try rather than fail to even start because he wishes his circumstances allowed a more ideal approach. So, start now, in a way you are able. When questions or confusions arise, then ask for the help and explanations of a wise man you know. You could also write *Catholic Candle* to ask your question.

Let us not think that Saint Thomas is too much for the faithful and that he is distant from their faith, **for this is not true and [is] damaging to the faithful**. The philosophy and theology of Saint Thomas are truth. Therefore, let us not say that the truth explained in all its simplicity, and clarity, in addition to its profound logic, cannot be understood by the faithful. That would be condescension on our part. This would amount to abandoning and despairing of communicating to the faithful – a profound tragedy.²⁵

Conclusion

We should spend our lives pursuing the truth, especially about our Holy Catholic Faith. We should do this by reading the great authors of the *Great Books*.

Looking Ahead

We hear all around us that what is called “academic freedom” is essential to successful learning. But what *is* academic freedom? And is it *good*?

To Be Continued ...



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<https://catholiccandle.org/canasearch/>



²⁵ Archbishop Lefebvre, *The spirit of our statutes*, the fourth conference in a retreat in Écône, in September 1988, (emphasis added).

Read also, the popes praising the Doctors of the Church telling us that we should especially read them. As those popes explain, most of all, we should read St. Thomas.
<https://catholiccandle.org/2017/12/16/why-faithful-catholics-follow-the-doctors-of-the-church/>

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