

NINTH DAY

Perseverance

Preparatory Prayer (Page 2)

A VICTORIOUS death was the reward of the Holy Helpers' perseverance in the service of God. During this novena you have, no doubt, formed many good resolutions, exclaiming with the Royal Prophet, "And I said, now I have begun" (*Ps. lxxvi. 11*). But it happens that many, despite their good will, become remiss in the pursuit of virtue. Satan is assiduously trying to accomplish their ruin, representing to them and exaggerating the difficulties to be encountered on the path of virtue. They hesitate, falter, and finally turn back. This is the most unfortunate happening that can occur. Of the condition of such a one Our Lord Himself says: "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through places without water, seeking rest; and not finding, he saith: 'I will return into my house whence I came out.' And when he is come, he findeth it swept and garnished. Then he goeth and taketh with him seven spirits more wicked than himself, and entering in they dwell there. And the last state of that man cometh worse than the first" (*Luke xi. 24-26*). Are these words not a sufficient warning to encourage us to persevere in our good resolves?

PRACTICE

IN concluding this novena, survey again the depth of that incomprehensible eternity which is awaiting you. Contemplate in spirit the endless chain of centuries following each other there in reward or in punishment. Does this thought not banish all the difficulties of perseverance?

Prayer

O GOD, whose mercies are infinite and whose goodness is without limit, I beseech Thee through the merits and intercession of the Holy Helpers, grant me the grace of perseverance in Thy love and service to the end. Thou, who dost dispense so many favors through the Holy Helpers, despise not my prayer, but graciously hear and grant it. Amen.

LITANY OF THE FOURTEEN HOLY HELPERS (Pages 3-5)

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NOVENA OF THE FOURTEEN HOLY HELPERS

RECITED FOR ANY NINE CONSECUTIVE DAYS

Chapter 17

Novena To All Fourteen Holy Helpers



Novena to All the Fourteen Holy Helpers

FIRST DAY

The Devotion to the Fourteen Holy Helpers

PREPARATORY PRAYER
(By St Alphonsus Liguori.)

GREAT princes of heaven, Holy Helpers, who sacrificed to God all your earthly possessions, wealth, preferment, and even life, and who now are crowned in heaven in the secure enjoyment of eternal bliss and glory; have compassion on me, a poor sinner in this vale of tears, and obtain for me from God, for whom you gave up all things and who loves you as His servants, the strength to bear patiently all the trials of this life, to overcome all temptations, and to persevere in God's service to the end, that one day I too may be received into your company, to praise and glorify Him, the supreme Lord, whose beatific vision you enjoy, and whom you praise and glorify for ever. Amen.

MEDITATION

THE practice of honoring and invoking the saints to obtain, through their intercession, help in the various needs of body and soul, is as old as the Church. At what period, however, the custom of having recourse to the fourteen saints called Holy Helpers originated, is unknown. Nevertheless it is certain that each one of them was invoked for his intercession with God since his entrance into heaven. Prayer is the Christian's resource in every difficulty: and difficulties and trials are never wanting on earth. Because the needs of mankind on earth are various, the faithful selected certain saints as intercessors in certain cases of distress, and obtained relief; hence these saints came to be regarded as special patrons in such trials, and were called Holy Helpers.

PRACTICE

MAKE this novena with full confidence in the power of the intercession of the Fourteen Holy Helpers. During their earthly life they devoted their whole energy to the spreading of God's kingdom and the relief and succor of their fellow-men. Much more efficiently can they do so now when they are in the enjoyment of eternal happiness, and can supplicate for us at the very throne of God.

The saints *can* help us through their intercession. God hears their prayers and He wrought miracles to confirm us in this belief, even whilst His servants sojourned here on earth. They *desire* and are willing to help us. St. Bernard says: "In heaven hearts do not grow cold; they are rather rendered more affectionate and tender. By receiving the crown of justice the saints were not hardened against the sufferings of their brethren on earth."

EIGHTH DAY

Prayer

Preparatory Prayer (Page 2)

MEDITATION

THE Holy Helpers, well knowing the efficacy of prayer, assiduously devoted themselves to it. From it they drew that wonderful strength which sustained them in their combat for the Faith.

Prayer is the elevation of the mind to God, intercourse with Him by acts of adoration, praise, thanksgiving, and petition. St. Chrysostom says of prayer: "Without prayer it is impossible to lead a good life; for no one can practise virtue except he humbly implores God for it, who alone can give him the necessary strength. Who ceases to love and practise prayer, no longer possesses the gifts of the Spirit. But he that perseveres in the service of God, and deems it an irreparable loss to miss constant prayer, possesses every virtue and is a friend of God."

PRACTICE

OFFER yourself at the beginning of each day to God, and thereby you will belong to Him throughout its whole course. Renew your consecration to Him frequently during the day by short acts of virtue and especially by a good intention, thus rendering all your work a prayer, and you will attain perfection.

Prayer

O GOD, I implore Thee through the merits and intercession of the Holy Helpers, to grant me the spirit of prayer, that following their example I may walk in Thy presence and ever enjoy the consolation of intercourse with Thee. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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SEVENTH DAY

Human Respect

Preparatory Prayer (Page 2)

MEDITATION

BY THE conscientious fulfilment of the duties of their state of life the Holy Helpers show us that the will of God alone was the motive of all their actions. Human respect, regard for the opinion of others, did not influence them.

The cowardly fear, "What will people say?" was the ruin of many a soul. The enemy of mankind is ever intent upon preventing us from doing good through human respect. He insinuates that virtue and piety are out of date and ridiculed. From human respect many a person boasts of that which ought to make him blush; he thinks it discreditable to be less remiss in his religious obligations than others. Ought the opinion and ridicule of the world influence us to prevent our pleasing God? St. Paul says: "If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ" (*Gal. i. 10*). Our Lord Himself tells us, "He that shall deny Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven" (*Matt. x. 33*).

PRACTICE

OUR Lord says: "So let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven" (*Matt. v. 16*). Do not stray from the path of duty on account of human respect; do not let yourself be influenced by the judgments of the world.

Prayer

MERCIFUL God, who gavest the Holy Helpers the grace to fulfil Thy will regardless of human respect; grant that we may obtain through their intercession and merits the courage to despise the opinion of men, and ever serve Thee with a fearless heart. Amen.

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Therefore, in calling on them, have full confidence in their power and ability to come to your aid.

Prayer

WE BESEECH Thee, O Lord, to hear the prayer which we send up to Thee in honor of Thy glorified servants, the Fourteen Holy Helpers: and as we can not rely upon our own justice, grant our petition through the intercession of those whose merits have made them especially dear to Thee. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

LITANY OF THE FOURTEEN HOLY HELPERS

LORD, have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, hear us.

Christ, graciously hear us.

God the Father of heaven, have mercy on us.

God the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy on us.

God the Holy Ghost, have mercy on us.

Holy Trinity, one God, have mercy on us.

Holy Mary, queen of martyrs, pray for us.

St. Joseph, helper in all needs, pray for us.

Fourteen Holy Helpers, pray for us.

St. George, valiant martyr of Christ, pray for us.

St. Blase, zealous bishop and benefactor of the poor, pray for us.

St. Erasmus, mighty protector of the oppressed, pray for us.

St. Pantaleon, miraculous exemplar of charity, pray for us.

St. Vitus, special protector of chastity, pray for us.

St. Christophorus, mighty intercessor in dangers, pray for us.

St. Dionysius, shining mirror of faith and confidence, pray for us.

St. Cyriacus, terror of hell, pray for us.

St. Achatus, helpful advocate in death, pray for us.

St. Eustachius, exemplar of patience in adversity, pray for us.

St. Giles, despiser of the world, pray for us.

St. Margaret, valiant champion of the Faith, pray for us.

St. Catherine, victorious defender of the Faith and of purity, pray for us.

St. Barbara, mighty patroness of the dying, pray for us.

All ye Holy Helpers, pray for us.

All ye saints of God, pray for us.

In temptations against faith, pray for us.

In adversity and trials, pray for us.

In anxiety and want, pray for us.

In every combat, pray for us.

In every temptation, pray for us.

In sickness, pray for us.
 In all needs, pray for us.
 In fear and terror, pray for us.
 In dangers of salvation, pray for us.
 In dangers of honor, pray for us.
 In dangers of reputation, pray for us.
 In dangers of property, pray for us.
 In dangers by fire and water, pray for us.
 Be merciful, spare us, O Lord!
 Be merciful, graciously hear us, O Lord!
 From all sin, deliver us, O Lord.
 From Thy wrath, deliver us, O Lord.
 From the scourge of earthquake, deliver us, O Lord.
 From plague, famine, and war, deliver us, O Lord.
 From lightning and storms, deliver us, O Lord.
 From a sudden and unprovided death, deliver us, O Lord.
 From eternal damnation, deliver us, O Lord.
 Through the mystery of Thy holy incarnation, deliver us, O Lord.
 Through Thy birth and Thy life, deliver us, O Lord.
 Through Thy cross and passion, deliver us, O Lord.
 Through Thy death and burial, deliver us, O Lord.
 Through the merits of Thy blessed Mother Mary, deliver us, O Lord.
 Through the merits of the Fourteen Holy Helpers, deliver us, O Lord.
 On the Day of Judgment, deliver us, O Lord!
 We sinners, beseech Thee, hear us.
 That Thou spare us, we beseech Thee, hear us.
 That Thou pardon us, we beseech Thee, hear us.
 That Thou convert us to true penance, we beseech Thee, hear us.
 That Thou give and preserve the fruits of the earth, we beseech Thee, hear us.
 That Thou protect and propagate Thy holy Church, we beseech Thee, hear us.
 That Thou preserve peace and concord among the nations, we beseech Thee, hear us.
 That Thou give eternal rest to the souls of the departed, we beseech Thee, hear us.
 That Thou come to our aid through the intercession of the Holy Helpers, we beseech Thee, hear us.
 That through the intercession of St. George Thou preserve us in the Faith, we beseech Thee, hear us.
 That through the intercession of St. Blase Thou confirm us in hope, we beseech Thee, hear us.
 That through the intercession of St. Erasmus Thou enkindle in us Thy holy love, we beseech Thee, hear us.
 That through the intercession of St. Pantaleon Thou give us charity for our neighbor, we beseech Thee, hear us.
 That through the intercession of St. Vitus Thou teach us the value of our soul, we beseech Thee, hear us.
 That through the intercession of St. Christophorus Thou preserve us from sin, we beseech Thee, hear us.

MEDITATION

CHARITY is one of the fundamental virtues of the Christian religion. The moral doctrine preached by Christ is comprised in the words: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. And the second is like to this. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments dependeth the whole law and the prophets" (*Matt. xxii. 37-40*).

As in everything else, the Holy Helpers are our exemplars also in charity. Charity consists in wishing well to our fellow-men, rejoicing with the glad and sympathizing with the sad, doing good to all, excusing their faults whenever possible, disclosing them only when necessary, being friendly, indulgent, meek, and helpful toward them. We love our neighbor if we succor the poor and distressed, if we harbor no envy for the rich, if we esteem the just for their virtue, and hate—not the sinner—but sin. We love our neighbor if we are not content with harboring these sentiments in our heart, but show them by our actions.

PRACTICE

ENDEAVOR to exercise this charity according to the spirit of Christ. The love of your neighbor must not be a sentimental affection; it must not originate in casual qualities of character or rank, in inclination, etc., but must have the love of God for its motive. We must exercise charity toward all because God wills it, and in the manner in which He wills it. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

Prayer

O GOD of charity, who dost will that I love my neighbor for Thy sake, grant me the grace, through the intercession of the Holy Helpers, to be animated with that spirit of charity which embraces all and excludes none, which "is patient, kind, envieth not, dealeth not perversely, is not puffed up, is not ambitious, seeketh not her own, is not provoked to anger, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth with the truth, beareth all things, believeth all things, endureth all things, and never falleth away" (*1 Cor. xiii. 4-8*). Amen.

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FIFTH DAY

The Love of God

Preparatory Prayer (Page 2)

MEDITATION

THE love of God which inflamed the Holy Helpers showed forth in their whole life, and particularly at their death. We, too, ought to be inflamed with such love, for without it faith, wisdom, the gift of tongues, and good works in general, avail nothing; for the love of God must inspire them all. "And we know that to them that love God, all things work together unto good" (*Rom. viii. 28*). Such, and such alone, will receive the crown of life. Did not God love us first? To redeem us from sin and eternal death He spared not His only begotten, divine Son. All goods of life and fortune are gifts of His love, evidences of His infinite love. And we find it difficult to return this love? How ungrateful not to love God with your whole heart!

PRACTICE

IMITATE the Holy Helpers in their ardent love of God. Implore their intercession to obtain it. Meditate often on God's love for you, and your heart will be enflamed with love for Him.

Prayer

O GOD of mercy and love, I thank Thee from all my heart for the countless graces which Thy infinite love has bestowed on me. By the ardent love which the Holy Helpers had for Thee, I implore Thee to enkindle in my heart the flame of Thy love, so that I may remain in Thee and Thou in me. Amen.

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SIXTH DAY

The Virtue of Charity

Preparatory Prayer (Page 2)

That through the intercession of St. Dionysius Thou give us tranquillity of conscience, we beseech Thee, hear us.

That through the intercession of St. Cyriacus Thou grant us resignation to Thy holy will, we beseech Thee, hear us.

That through the intercession of St. Eustachius Thou give us patience in adversity, we beseech Thee, hear us.

That through the intercession of St. Achatius Thou grant us a happy death, we beseech Thee, hear us.

That through the intercession of St. Giles Thou grant us a merciful judgment, we beseech Thee, hear us.

That through the intercession of St. Margaret Thou preserve us from hell, we beseech Thee, hear us.

That through the intercession of St. Catherine Thou shorten our purgatory, we beseech Thee, hear us.

That through the intercession of St. Barbara Thou receive us in heaven, we beseech Thee, hear us.

That through the intercession of all the Holy Helpers Thou wilt grant our prayers, we beseech Thee, hear us.

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, graciously hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us, O Lord.

V. Pray for us, ye Fourteen Holy Helpers.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promise of Christ.

Let us Pray

ALMIGHTY and eternal God, who hast bestowed extraordinary graces and gifts on Thy saints George, Blase, Erasmus, Pantaleon, Vitus, Christophorus, Dionysius, Cyriacus, Eustachius, Achatius, Giles, Margaret, Catherine, and Barbara, and hast illustrated them by miracles; we beseech Thee to graciously hear the petitions of all who invoke their intercession. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

O God, who didst miraculously fortify the Fourteen Holy Helpers in the confession of the Faith; grant us, we beseech Thee, to imitate their fortitude in overcoming all temptations against it, and protect us through their intercession in all dangers of soul and body, so that we may serve Thee in purity of heart and chastity of body. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

INVOCATION OF THE HOLY HELPERS

FOURTEEN Holy Helpers, who served God in humility and confidence on earth and are now in the enjoyment of His beatific vision in heaven; because you persevered till death you gained the crown of eternal life. Remember the dangers that surround us in this vale of tears, and intercede for us in all our needs and adversities. Amen.

Fourteen Holy Helpers, select friends of God, I honor you as mighty intercessors, and come with filial confidence to you in my needs, for the relief of which I have undertaken to make this novena. Help me by your intercession to placate God's wrath, which I have provoked by my sins, and aid me in amending my life and doing penance. Obtain for me the grace to serve God with a willing heart, to be resigned to His holy will, to be patient in adversity and to persevere unto the end, so that, having finished my earthly course, I may join you in heaven, there to praise for ever God, who is wonderful in His saints. Amen.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

O FAITHFUL servants of God and powerful protectors of man, Holy Helpers! Since Our Lord appointed you the heavenly advocates for our needs on earth, I confidently turn to you for help in my distress. Countless numbers praise you for aiding them with counsel in doubt, with consolation in anxiety, with health in illness, with safety in danger, with delivery from prison, and with help and assistance in all tribulations. Therefore I, too, have recourse to you, and implore you not to refuse me your aid.

Give thanks to God for me for all the graces He granted me during this novena. I ascribe them to your great merits and powerful intercession. I thank you all together, and each one in particular, for your interest in my favor before the throne of God. I commend myself to your continued protection, that I may one day be united with you in heaven, there to thank the Giver of all good things and to praise Him for all eternity. Amen.

Prayers of Petition and Intercession

I. Three Invocations

1. GREAT friends of God, Holy Helpers, humbly saluting and venerating you, I implore your help and intercession. Bring my prayers before the throne of the Most Holy Trinity, so that I may experience in all the difficulties and trials of life the mercy of the eternal Father, the love of the incarnate divine Son, and the assistance of the Holy Ghost; that despondency may not depress me when God's wise decree imposes on my shoulders a heavy burden. Above all, I implore your assistance at the hour of death. Help me then to gain the victory over the temptations and assaults of Satan, and to leave this world hopefully trusting in God's mercy, to join you in heaven, there to praise Him for ever and ever. Amen.

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FOURTH DAY

The Virtue of Hope

Preparatory Prayer (Page 2)

MEDITATION

"HOPE confoundeth not" (*Rom. v. 6*). According to the commentators these words of Holy Scripture are to be understood in the sense that our works must be in conformity with that which is the object of our hope; that is, we must live in such a manner that we really merit the reward of heaven.

We sin against hope also by presumption in God's mercy, by despair, and by over-confidence in our own righteousness. According to Holy Scripture we can not, of our own efficacy, perform a good act, but can do all in Him that strengthens us.

All these truths are exemplified in the lives of the Holy Helpers. Their hope was based on the firm foundation of faith, and consequently, like it, firm, constant, and unwavering.

PRACTICE

LIKE the Holy Helpers, hope to obtain from God all things necessary to salvation, for "the Lord is good to them that hope in Him, to the soul that seeketh Him" (*Lam. iii. 25*). Live so that He can fulfil His promises. Place no obstacle to His bounty and might by a sinful life.

Prayer

ETERNAL God of love and mercy, I thank Thee for all the benefits Thou hast conferred upon me, and hope to obtain, through the intercession of the Holy Helpers, all the graces necessary for my salvation. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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THIRD DAY

The Virtue of Faith

Preparatory Prayer (Page 2)

MEDITATION

THE Holy Helpers were so thoroughly imbued with the virtue of divine faith, that they believed its sacred truths with perfect abandonment of their intellect, will, liberty, and whole being. They wavered not amid the severest torments, but remained firm until death in the confession of Christ.

Our time is noted for assaults on the Faith and on the Church that teaches it. The Church, the depository of divine revelation, is blasphemed in her doctrine, in her precepts, in her sacraments, in her ministers, in her cult, in her entire essence. Were you never ashamed of your Catholic name? What cowardliness, what timidity, what downright malice!

PRACTICE

REVIVE your faith by the consideration of the example of the Holy Helpers. Do not, from human respect, neglect the sanctification of the Lord's Day, the observance of days of fast and abstinence, the reception of the holy sacraments, the profession of your belief in the real presence of Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, etc. Meditate frequently on the words of Christ: "He that shall deny Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven" (*Matt. x. 33*).

Prayer

O GOD, I beseech Thee, through the faith of the Holy Helpers, grant me the grace to treasure in my heart the doctrines of our holy faith, to believe them firmly, to confess them bravely, and to live according to their precepts, that through that same faith I may become worthy to be admitted to Thy beatific vision in heaven. Amen.

LITANY OF THE FOURTEEN HOLY HELPERS (Pages 3-5)

INVOCATION OF THE HOLY HELPERS (Page 6)

2. With confiding trust I turn to you, Holy Helpers, who were selected by God before many other saints to be the special intercessors and advocates of the distressed. Obtain for me strength and courage to struggle and suffer on earth for the glory of God, for the propagation of our holy faith, and for my own perfection. You are fruitful branches of the true and living vine, Jesus Christ, for whom you heroically suffered hunger and thirst, persecution and ignominy, afflictions and adversity, tortures and death. Here on earth you were true disciples and dauntless martyrs of Christ. Assist me to follow your example and to suffer for His sake, so that I may not be parted from Him as a useless member, but persevere in His service despite all trials and tribulations of life. Knowing my inconstancy and weakness, I have recourse to you, O glorious members of the Church triumphant, and implore you to support my feeble prayers, and to bear them before the throne of the Almighty, who, for your sake, will hear them. Amen.

3. Great friends and servants of God, Holy Helpers! Humbly saluting and venerating you, I implore your help and intercession. God has promised and granted that whosoever invokes your aid shall be relieved in his needs and succored at the hour of death. Therefore I have recourse to you and confidently implore your aid. I am surrounded by difficulties and my soul is oppressed with grief. Burdened with sins, the fear of God's rigorous judgment appalls me, whilst Satan ceases not to exert all his power to accomplish my eternal ruin.

Therefore I implore your assistance, powerful Holy Helpers, in my dire distress. By the penitential life you led, by the cruel tortures you suffered, and by your holy death I entreat you to pray for me. Obtain for me the remission of my sins and perseverance to the end in God's grace. Assist me in my agony and protect me against the wily assaults of Satan, that through your help I may die a happy death and enter a blissful eternity. Amen.

II. Prayer in Illness

COMPASSIONATE Holy Helpers, who restored health to so many through the power of the name of Jesus; behold me suffering from bodily illness and from wounds of the soul. Implore the kind, merciful Good Samaritan, your and my Lord Jesus Christ, to heal the wounds of my soul by washing them in His most precious blood, and to quicken my spirit by His sanctifying grace. If it, then, be God's holy will and for the welfare of my soul, let me experience the powerful effect of your intercession, that, restored to health, I may serve God with greater fervor, and promote your veneration together with so many who experienced your help in illness and suffering. Amen.

III. Prayer for the Sick

MERCIFUL Holy Helpers, look benignly upon me, who implore your intercession for a sick person. Our Lord and Redeemer Jesus Christ, who Himself went about healing and doing good, appointed you the special protectors and intercessors of the sick, and restored to bodily and spiritual health many for whom you prayed. Encouraged thereby to invoke you, I implore you to offer up to His sacred Heart all the pains and torments He suffered during His bitter passion. Offer up to Him also your own sufferings for God's glory, which you underwent during life, and in death; offer up to Him all the anguish and distress suffered by the sick person for whom I invoke your intercession. Ask Him to restore him to health of body, and to infuse into his soul the grace of salvation, so that he may devote his life with renewed vigor to the service of God and to the fulfilment of his duties, and thereby gather rich merits for eternity.

But if God, in the designs of His providence, should otherwise dispose, implore for the sick person patience in his illness, resignation to the divine will, and the grace of a happy death. Assist him in his agony, and conduct his soul to the throne of the Almighty. Amen.

IV. Prayer of Parents for Their Children

HOLY Helpers, assist me to give thanks to God for blessing me with children. Having received them from Him, it is my duty to train them for His service. Therefore I commend them to your special protection. Guard them from sin, help them to know and fulfil their duties, preserve them from all harm of body and soul; pray for them that they may be and remain children of God, For me, obtain the grace always to take good care of them, to edify them by good example, to punish their faults wisely, to preserve their innocence, and to instruct them unto piety, so that they and I may together enjoy the eternal happiness of heaven. Amen.

V. Prayer of Children for Their Parents

HOLY Helpers, mighty intercessors with God in all necessities; God strictly commanded that children should love, honor, and obey their parents. Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ Himself gave them the example of submission and obedience by being subject to His mother and foster-father. I commend myself to your powerful intercession and implore you to obtain for me the grace to follow His example. For my parents I implore protection from all evil of body and soul, a long and prosperous life, and a happy death. Reward them for all the care, anxiety, labor, and trouble which they underwent patiently for my sake with the eternal crown of heavenly glory. Amen.

VI. Prayer of Married People

HOLY Helpers, powerful intercessors at the throne of God, by whose providence we were indissolubly joined in holy wedlock through the sacramental bonds of

matrimony; obtain for us, through your intercession, the grace to dwell together in mutual love and peace, and to fulfil faithfully the duties of our state of life; that following the example of the saints and elect who lived in wedlock, we may merit God's grace and blessing by a virtuous life here on earth, and united in heaven praise and bless Him for ever. Amen.

SECOND DAY

The Destiny of Man

Preparatory Prayer (Page 2)

MEDITATION

THE Holy Helpers faithfully co-operated with God's designs concerning their eternal destiny. No obstacle could prevail on them to stray from the path of duty. Always and everywhere they fulfilled the will of God.

You, too, have an eternal destiny. You are not your own master, but belong to God, whose servant and property you are. Therefore you must obey Him, and not your own inclinations; you must do His will, and not your own. God had the right of requiring our submission to Him without giving us a reward, because He is Our Lord; nevertheless He promised to give us Himself in reward for our faithful service. Ought this not be sufficient inducement for us to serve Him zealously and gratefully?

Remember, moreover, that you shall be unhappy both in this and in the next world if you do not give yourself entirely to God, for whom you were created. St. Augustine says: "Thou hast created us for Thee, O Lord, and our heart remains restless till it rests in Thee."

PRACTICE

THANK God for the undeserved grace of creation and redemption. Make an act of contrition for having served Him so negligently. Promise amendment, and invoke the aid of God's grace through the intercession of the Holy Helpers.

Prayer

O GOD, who according to the decrees of Thy providence hast created man for eternal bliss; grant, through the intercession of the Holy Helpers, that I may attain to my destiny by being united with Thee in this life and loving and praising Thee for ever in heaven. Amen.