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NIHIL NISI IESUM

Dedicated to Mary, Mother of God

Salus Animarum Suprema Lex Esto (Canon Law 175)

The Salvation of Souls is the Supreme Law in the Church

An Apostolate of Prayer for the Dying and the Dead



Many seek some form of active Apostolate to serve Christ and the Church, especially in the way of helping those poor souls most in need of assistance ... they seek to assist, to be actively involved in the lives of others who *desperately* need

help — and it has nothing to do with money. Most of us do not have money, and even if we did, it would be of no avail whatever — although it involves the gravest, the most vital act of charity possible. What is more, you do not have to go anywhere. It will come to you.

What, then, is this most needful act of charity, and *in the most dire need possible* in any person's entire life?

It is this:

Whenever you read of or hear about another's death — in the news, in your town, in another and remote part of the world ... no matter who it is ... you should immediately make the Sign of the Cross and beg God's mercy on the person who has died, and His pardon for their sins, and to bring that soul to final repentance and everlasting life in God's presence.

He alone is the just Judge. It matters not to us who it is that has died: not his faith or his lack of it; that particular soul is in *dire* need of God's mercy and forgiveness ... and so often has no one else to pray for them.

Stop what you are doing for a moment, even if it is within yourself, and pray for

them. It will take a few seconds ... but could mean the salvation of a soul in and through the immeasurable mercy of Christ Jesus.

What should we Pray?

The traditional Catholic prayer for the dead and for the souls in Purgatory is the following:

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord,

and let perpetual light shine upon them.

May the souls of all the faithful departed,

through the mercy of God,

Rest in peace. (hence, the abbreviation **R.I.P.**)

In Latin it is:

Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine.

Et lux perpetua luceat eis.

Fidelium animae, per misericordiam Dei,

requiescant in pace.

You will be surprised how active — even demanding — you will find this quiet and hidden apostolate to be.

What is more, carry it a step further: when you hear the wail of an ambulance, do likewise, and pray for the healing of the soul to whose need it is going. If they are in peril of death (and you know not!) pray for God's mercy and forgiveness.

This way, you will accompany so many souls on their last and often most perilous journey: from this life to the next; from this world to Heaven, despite the very real danger of Hell.

One day *you* will need the prayers of others — and perhaps *one single person's prayer* will open the gates of Heaven ... and shut the gates of Hell. Your prayer to our merciful God may be the one that makes the difference.

Remember this the next time you read the news or browse the Internet. Especially in these evil days.

Further Reflections

“I am house-bound — what can I do”?

“I am at work all day — what can I do”?

“I am old and alone — what can I do”?

What clarion is needed to remind you of what **only you** can give in a way and measure that is yours alone, and of inestimable value?

Allow me to suggest a few:

STOP:

- When you hear a siren ...
- When you see a racing fire truck ...
- When you see a speeding ambulance ...
- When you watch a hearse pass ...
- When you hear the screeching of tires ...
- When you see tears in the face of another ...

Each of these is a clarion, a loud call, to **stop** whatever you are doing ... **and to pray** for someone in *desperate need*; in the case of an ambulance, urgent, even critical need; and upon observing a hearse, an even greater need for mercy that extends to

eternity.

This is a genuine Apostolate ... an Apostolate of Prayer for the Dying and the Dead. It requires your believing that God hears our prayers and that God answers our prayers. It is a realization that we are, for that time in prayer, *intimately* united with those who suffer and die. Our prayers can help them! **But only if we pray.**

“But” you further protest, “I would be praying practically all day!” Yes ... you would. And someday — absolutely for certain — *you will be that person in need of the prayers of others* who prostrate themselves (inwardly or outwardly) before God Who can do all things. “Whatever you ask in My Name will be given you”, Christ told us. Yes, but what if no one invokes that Most Holy Name? What if we *leave it to others* to pray ...

- for the children of a dying father; children who have not yet learned to pray or who do not know God?
- for the injured, the dead, and the dying, and for the rescue workers at a suicide bomber site in some remote part of the world ...
- for the mother who alone survived the car crash that killed her husband and all her children.

We must come to realize that such calamities may come to *our own* doorstep and so much sooner than we imagine. Who will pray for us?

Our circumstances, it seems, always limit us. We never seem to be where we feel that we could be able help others in their desperate need ... even in their last need. Perhaps we even feel that we seldom encounter the need by others for our prayers at all: everyone we know and care about is well and there is no impending crisis at hand.

What will call us to prayer? What will remind us of how desperately our prayers are needed? How can we help those of whom we know little or nothing ... and yet need our prayers? Think of this: *Perhaps we will be the **only ones** praying for them!*

People do not need your “*thoughts*”!

What does this even *mean*? The currently senseless and terribly monotonous — as well as utterly pointless and useless — “sound-bite” that we ever hear upon hearing of another’s illness or death is this: “*You are in our thoughts.*”

It is the secular and “correct” meaninglessness that *demonstrates an utter absence of faith* and a thorough indoctrination with prevailing “social correctitude.” What is the point of these self-inflating words?

Do your “thoughts” somehow magically help others?

Do your “thoughts” *really* comfort anyone? Your *thoughts* are an endless train of related and unrelated events, ideas, or intuitions. They all have this in common: ***they are only thoughts ... and nothing more.*** They will pass or soon (as in “within seconds”) be replaced by *other* thoughts, and you are invested in them only fractionally, momentarily. Some thoughts will result in actions (most of them not memorable), but most do not. We are most often simply passive spectators of our own thoughts — if we are aware of them at all!

Our prominent political leaders are extremely adept at keeping unfortunate people and their families “*in their thoughts*” following some tragedy, and this is to say that they will forget them as soon as they leave the press conference hastily assembled to demonstrate their supposed “solidarity” with the sufferers — and because they have more pressing issues that are (surprise!) “in their thoughts” also. Especially when golfing immediately following the press conference

- “*Pray*” for the dead — every time you hear or read of someone’s death

- “*Pray*” every time you hear a siren — fire, ambulance, police — and pray when you witness a somber funeral cortege (which will one day be your own)
- “*Pray*” for the sick
- “*Pray*” for the dying

They do not want or need your “thoughts” — but they desire, indeed, *they need* your prayers ... to One Who *can* help them and deliver them.

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