



1ST SATURDAY DEVOTION NEWSLETTER

January 2019

FIFTEEN CATHOLIC NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

Excerpted from www.piercedhands.com

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1. **Read the Bible.** The whole thing. But don't start at Genesis and read through to Revelation. Check out a one year Bible plan online and take a more manageable approach to soaking in God's word this year.

2. **Get to know the Saints.** Learn about a new Saint each week. Figure out what you need to imitate in his or her life and virtues, and asking for his or her intercession." By the end of the year, you'll have 52 more new besties in heaven! Or maybe pick one Saint per month to get to know more deeply, or two or three Saints for the year whose biographies you can get. Anything to grow closer to your family in heaven.

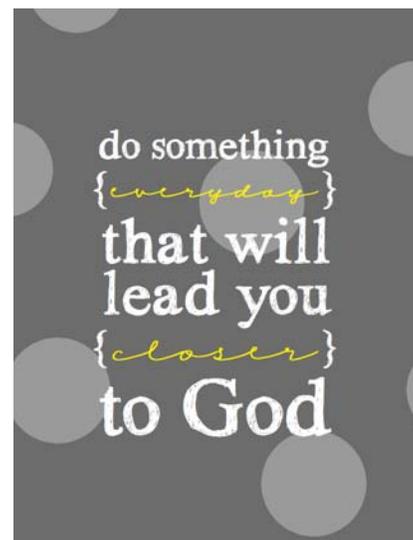
3. **Sign up for a holy hour.** Don't just promise yourself that you'll make a holy hour each week, actually sign up so there's more accountability than just your conscience. Check out churches near you for adoration schedule.

4. **Read something worthwhile.** You'll have to determine for yourself what a good goal would be—one spiritual book a month or half an hour of spiritual reading a day or maybe just one book this year—but reading worthwhile books can be an absolute game-changer.

5. **Commit to daily silent prayer.** Regular silent prayer is. What makes Saints? Every other kind of prayer (and there are many) only exists to lead you into silent prayer, but most of us spend all our prayer time doing and very little being. This year, commit to a certain amount of time every day without fail just being still before the Lord, talking to him and listening, too. Start with 15 minutes a day, see if you can't stretch it to 20 for Lent, then go from there.

6. **Cling to the Sacraments.** Make a concrete resolution to live a more Sacramental life. Up your confession game to once a month, add one extra daily Mass each week, or spend more time praying in a church instead of just praying in traffic. Perhaps it's something as small as crossing yourself every time you pass a Catholic church (greeting Jesus in the Eucharist) or making sure to stop by the tabernacle first thing when you get to church and last thing before you leave, even if you're just there to get something signed or to go to a meeting. Treat him like he's really present there.

7. **Go on a retreat.** It can be really difficult to find a way to leave home and work and family for several days to make a retreat, but it can also be absolutely life-changing. Make a commitment to go on a retreat this year, whether directed or silent.



THE EDITORS OF THE SPIRITUAL ARMY OF GOD THE FATHER'S 1ST SATURDAY NEWSLETTER ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR MAINTAINING THE CONSISTENT QUALITY AND ACCURACY OF THE SPIRITUAL ARMY OF GOD THE FATHER'S 1ST SATURDAY NEWSLETTER AND AS SUCH RESERVE THE RIGHT TO REJECT OR EDIT THE CONTENT OF ALL SUBMISSIONS FOR PUBLICATION. EDITING MAY INCLUDE, BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO, CHANGES TO GRAMMAR, SYNTAX AND STYLES, REMOVAL OF OFFENSIVE CONTENT AND REMOVAL OF PERSONAL NON-PUBLIC INFORMATION. SUBMISSION OF YOUR ARTICLE SIGNIFIES YOUR AGREEMENT TO THE TERMS AFOREMENTIONED.

Continued on Page 4

FEASTS FOR JANUARY

The feasts on the General Roman Calendar celebrated during the month of January are:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Mary, Mother of God, Solemnity 2 Basil the Great; Gregory Nazianzen, Memorial 3 Most Holy Name of Jesus, Opt. Mem. 4 Elizabeth Ann Seton (USA and CAN), Memorial 5 John Neumann, Memorial 6 Epiphany of the Lord, Solemnity 13 Baptism of the Lord, Feast 17 Anthony, Memorial 20 Second Sunday in Ordinary Time, Sunday 21 Agnes, Memorial | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 22 Day of Prayer for Unborn, Opt. Mem. 23 Vincent of Saragossa, Opt. Mem. 24 Francis de Sales; Our Lady of Peace, Memorial 25 Conversion of St. Paul the Apostle, Feast 26 Timothy and Titus, Memorial 27 Third Sunday in Ordinary Time, Sunday 31 John Bosco, Memorial <p>The feasts of St. Andre Bessette (January 6), Saints Fabian and Sebastian (January 20) and St. Angela Merici (January 27) superseded by the Sunday liturgy. ☐</p> |
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THANK YOU

... a small and simple phrase that comes from a grateful heart!

Psalm 106:2

THE 800 OUR FATHER DEVOTION SPONSORS

<p><u>Las Vegas, Nevada</u></p> <p>January 12, 2019</p> <p>Muego Family</p>	<p><u>Los Angeles, California</u></p> <p>January 19, 2018</p> <p>Nona Alapag Teresa Casasola</p> <p>Marinella DeLeon Norma Fuentes</p> <p>Marie Nguyen Elena Rosales</p>
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GOD TOUCHED ME

THE SAME EVER LOVING FATHER WHO CARES FOR YOU TODAY WILL CARE FOR YOU TOMORROW AND EVERY DAY

By Maria Sheets

*For I know the thoughts that I think over you, says the LORD:
thoughts of peace, and not of affliction, so that I may give you patience and an end.
Jeremiah 29:11*

Life is a journey that entails passage through roads that may be straight and smooth or curvy and bumpy, brightly lit or enveloped with darkness. How we navigate through these roads in order to reach our destinations matters. It plays a major part in making our journey enjoyable, meaningful and more importantly, pleasing in the eyes of God, our Creator, Savior and Redeemer.

Gary and I have deep faith in God and love Him with all our heart, soul, mind, body and spirit. We are grounded in the mighty deeds of Jesus and are strengthened and enlightened by the Holy Spirit in facing challenges along our journey.

The health crisis of Gary, battling stage 4 prostate cancer when it was initially diagnosed in October 2015, was surely a shock to us. It was a time in our marriage that we were looking forward to a relaxed and yet productive retirement in Las Vegas. Instead, a life changing scenario unfolded . . . a bump along the road of our life's journey as a couple. Plans of leisurely travel to foreign lands, personal pursuits and extended family vacations were put on hold.

We had to adopt to a stressful medical environment and a lifestyle dictated by the demands and uncertainties of an illness that saps your energy, takes control of a normal everyday life and foremost of all, tests one's faith in God. Doubts and questions of "why me?"; "what wrong have I done to deserve this?"; "I do not want to die!"; among other negative thoughts, haunt the mind.

As we get thrown into the "uncertainty" of this affliction, we immerse ourselves in prayers.

Prayers of adoration and reverence for the grace God has given us at birth; knowing that He created us in His own image; prayers of contrition for our imperfection and wrongdoings; prayer of thanksgiving for nourishing and renewing our lives by sending our Lord Jesus Christ to save us from our sinfulness; and prayers of supplications to lift us out of the darkness that envelops the road we are currently traversing.

In spite of the trials and tribulations, we continue to believe that God the Eternal Father loves us with an infinite love, that in His infinite wisdom, He knows what is best for us; that in His infinite power, He makes good even out of evil; and that in His infinite goodness, He makes everything to the advantage of those who love Him!

Gary and I have accepted God's plan for us, with love. We have anchored our life's journey believing in His seven promises: I am always with you; I will protect you; I will strengthen you; I will answer you; I will provide for you; I will give you peace; and I will always love you!

Thank you, Eternal Father, for Thy grace and abundant blessings, bestowing upon us 25 years of a happy marriage, and for Thy strong presence in our lives, through Jesus and Mary.

Praise, honor and glory to god the Almighty Father, son and holy spirit! Now and forever. Amen.

NOTE: This article was written by Maria Sheets in November. On December 4, 2018, Gary Sheets, her husband, went back to Our Eternal Father peacefully. His remains has been inurned on December 21, 2018. O Eternal Father, Thy will be done! ☐

15 CATHOLIC NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

8. **Join a group.** Whether it's a Bible study or a faith-sharing group, find a group of Catholics who are meeting each week to pray and grow in faith together. There's only so much you can grow in holiness when you're doing it alone.

9. **Do a daily examen.** More than just an examination of conscience, the examen invites us to see how God is working in our lives and how we've chosen to respond. Make a habit of spending 10 minutes each night (or morning, or on your commute) walking through the previous 24 hours with the Lord. End by reflecting on the best part of the last day, the worst part, and what particular grace you want for the next day.

10. **Learn to love the Blessed Mother.** For many of us, Mary wasn't a big part of our childhood, but she was a huge part of Jesus' childhood, so she has to be part of our lives. If you don't love her as you should (and who does?), try adding some Mary into your life. Maybe it's time to commit to a daily rosary, like it or not—but you don't have to! There are other ways to love Mary. You could try some good books on Mary. You could finally make your Marian consecration. Or daily pray a Marian litany. Or meditate on Marian art. Just try to love her more.

11. **Start fasting.** Did you know all Catholics are expected to perform some act of penance every Friday and the US Bishops recommend abstaining from meat? Do that. If you're already there, try dropping the sugar from your coffee or skipping snacks on non-feast days. Fasting isn't just for Lent, it's a way for us to be conformed to Christ every day.

12. **Make a pilgrimage.** You don't have to go to Rome. Look up some local (or only-10-hours-away) Saints or Blesseds or Venerables. If that's too far, just make a pilgrimage to your cathedral or a local shrine. The act of pilgrimage reminds us that we're all sojourners here, that this world is not our home and we're all pilgrims on our way back to the Father.

13. **Change what you listen to.** Instead of Top 40, try some Audrey Assad or Matt Maher. Instead of talk radio, check out some podcasts (Lanky Guys, Fr. John Riccardo, Catholic Stuff You Should Know, and The Eagle and Child). Sanctify your commute and your time in the pickup line by infusing it with Christ.

14. **Give.** If you're not tithing, resolve to up your giving to 10%. If you already are, maybe try for 11%, or even 15%. It may be more important for you to give your time than your money. Pray about a measurable goal for giving more, then do it.

15. **Forgive.** Forgiveness is a choice, not a feeling. Make a resolution to forgive somebody for whom you've been harboring resentment, then do something tangible like offering every Friday Mass for them or placing a picture of them before an image of the Blessed Mother or just daily praying, "Father, I forgive N. Please give me the grace to forgive him/her." For most of us, a year of such actions will move the forgiveness from our will to our hearts. For the rest, it's still a good start.

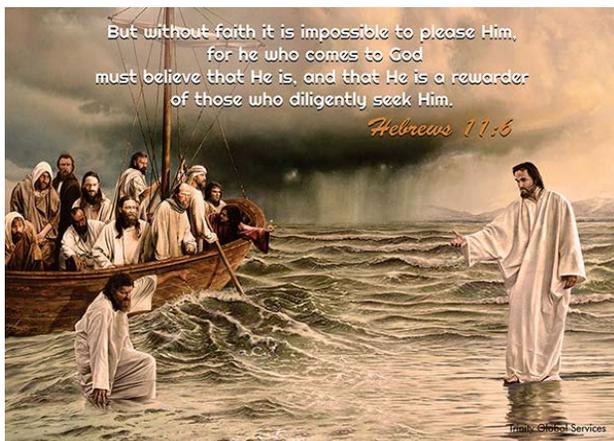
New Year's resolutions are notoriously hard to keep, but we belong to a Church that continually gives us a second chance. So make these resolutions, but set yourself a reminder for February 10th (just before Ash Wednesday) to check in on how these resolutions are going and try to start afresh for Lent. Then do the same thing for Easter, for Ordinary Time, and again for Advent. By the end of 2019, maybe you will have made a real change! ☐

SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT RECOMMENDED

SEEKING INSPIRATIONAL THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS THROUGH THE BIBLE

STRIVING TO HAVE FAITH

By Victor Araneta



Father, help me to believe that even if I am vulnerable and alone, I am not lost to you and the faith that lingers in my heart. I know it is not about trusting in Faith itself, but trusting in You.

Help me to have faith enough to carry on with my life no matter how deep my struggles are and how long and dark my tribulations come by as long as, the path leads to your glory. ☐

UPCOMING EVENTS

TOY DRIVE FOR THE LOS ANGELES CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

PLEASE DROP OFF
YOUR NEW UNWRAPPED TOYS
EVERY 1ST AND 3RD SATURDAYS
AT THE CONVENT OF THE SISTER
DISCIPLES OF THE DIVINE MASTER

THE 800 OUR FATHER DEVOTION

IN LOS ANGELES:
THE CONVENT OF THE SISTER DISCIPLES
OF THE DIVINE MASTER
BEGINNING WITH A MASS AT 8:30 AM
SATURDAY, JANUARY 19, 2019

IN LAS VEGAS:
AT THE MUEGO RESIDENCE
7712 VIA PASEO AVENUE
LAS VEGAS, NV 89128

THE APPARITION JOURNEY WITH THE BLESSED ONE [IN IRELAND, BELGIUM, GERMANY, & AUSTRIA]

DECEMBER 8 – 17, 2019
DAILY ACTIVITIES AND OTHER
INFORMATION ARE AVAILABLE AT
WWW.SPIRITUALARMYOFGOD.ORG