

Spiritual Game Plan

Do you want to be a really good Christian? The first of your battles will be to enter into and remain in the state of grace, to avoid any mortal sin. And, then, because you want to love God above all things, you will also try not to commit venial sins.

The practice of some acts of piety throughout the day will help you to have a divine contemplative life in the midst of the daily routine. The habitual performance of these acts will also be the foundation for growing in Christian virtues. Most important is to be consistent in your daily schedule, in your spiritual game plan, so that you will live as a child of God.

Daily

- *Get up at a fixed time*, as early as possible. Eight hours of sleep should be enough.
- *Offer your day* to God through the intercession of our Lady.
- *Work with order and intensity* during the day as a way of serving God. Set goals and establish priorities in order to develop a practical schedule. Sanctifying ordinary work is the goal of our life.
- *Try to attend Mass, receiving holy Communion*, as often as possible. This is the best sacrifice we can offer to God. Prepare yourself for the Mass by spending some time in prayer.
- *Spend some time in mental prayer* before the Blessed Sacrament (15 minutes, if possible).
- Pray the *Angelus* at noontime.
- Pray the *Rosary*, if possible, with your family, offering each decade for a specific intention.
- Do some other *spiritual reading*. Start with the New Testament or some well-known spiritual book. Ten to fifteen minutes is sufficient.
- Make a short *examination of conscience* at the end of the day before going to bed. Two or three minutes is enough. Follow these steps: Humble yourself in the presence of God. Tell him, "Lord, if you will, you can make me clean." Ask for light to acknowledge your defects and virtues and to see the dangers and opportunities of the day. Ask for repentance, amendment, and encouragement.

Weekly

- Center all activities around the *holy Mass* on *Sunday*, the Lord's day. It is also a family day-for rest and spiritual growth.
- If you do not receive holy Communion every day, receive at least on Sundays and holy days of obligation.
- Saturday is traditionally dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Honor her and say some special prayer, such as the *Hail Holy Queen*.

Monthly

- Go to *Confession* at least once a month. It is the sacrament of joy. Pope John Paul II says: "God is always the one who is principally offended by sin-'I have sinned against You' -and God alone can forgive. He does so through the ministry of the priest in the sacrament of Penance, which is the ordinary way of obtaining forgiveness and remission of mortal sins. Every mortal sin must always be stated with its determining circumstances in an individual confession."
- Seek and follow the *spiritual guidance* of a wise, prudent, and knowledgeable priest.
- *Spend a few hours in recollection*, best done before the Blessed Sacrament. Consider how you are directing your life toward God.

Yearly

- *Spend two three days each year in silence*, speaking with God only. A few days of *retreat* are necessary for the soul in the same way that the body needs a vacation. It is a yearly opportunity for conversion.

Always

- Stay in the *presence of God*: be aware that he is always close to you. Try to please him in everything as a child tries to please his/her parents.
- *Thank God* for the graces that he constantly gives you.
- Do everything *for the love of God*: this is purity of intention. Always purify your intention. Make *acts of contrition* and *atonement* for your sins and sins of others.
- Try to *live as you would like to die*. We shall die as we have lived.