

Maxims

**The ABCs
of the
CSJ
Spiritual
Life**

unselfishness

“Learn from the great apostle St. Paul the prudence, sincerity, ardor, unselfishness, constancy and tirelessness, you will need to imitate in your works.”

(Maxim XI, 7)

“Remain constant in your undertakings, never giving them up whatever opposition you may encounter unless you are completely unable to do anything more about them.”

(Maxim XI, 5)

abandonment

“Never think of the future unless it is somehow necessarily related to your present work: abandon everything to the Providence of God your Father.”

(Maxim X, 4)

“Recognize and tenderly love the presence of God in all the events of your life, however trying they may be.”

(Maxim X, 9)

CSJs

The Sister of St. Joseph
moves always towards
profound love of God
and neighbor
without distinction.

Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet
St. Louis Province

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beneficence

“Let your charity toward your neighbor be patient, beneficent and totally obliging, bearing no trace of bitterness or animosity; of rash judgments, of detraction or the least sign of coldness and of words or gestures in the least way offensive. In other words, let your charity be filled with the justice of the Gospel: do unto others what you would have others do unto you; and whatever you would not want done unto you, do not do unto others.” (Maxim VIII, 3)

diligence

“In order to combine prudence with sentiments of true humility; although you should expect everything from God in whatever you undertake, nevertheless be as diligent in carrying out your good works as if all depended on your effort alone and as if God had entrusted their success to your watchfulness alone and to your work.”

(Maxim III, 4)

example

“Continually ponder this truth: that a holy and exemplary life is incomparable, more profitable to the neighbor than eloquence.

People are more profoundly moved by a saintly example than by works.”

(Maxim 1, 4)

Follow through

“Follow through on good works that you undertake until they are almost completed and then, if can be done conveniently, have someone else complete them and get the glory before others, and you will have greater glory before God.”
(Maxim III, 15)

gentleness

“Live in peace and interior gentleness always and show it outwardly by acting without haste or overeagerness. Even suffer what you have to suffer peacefully ... and in loving acceptance of all the plans of his divine will ... Furthermore, never consider events, however trying, as obstacles but as very beneficial and necessary to living your life: if you view them as the effects of the very gentle, very loving Providence of God ... then you will love them tenderly and receive them willingly.” (Maxim VII)

hope

“When it seems that everything should throw you into total despair, hope for everything from the divine goodness, and, in order to enliven your confidence, believe, as indeed you should, that, if your plans are of God, they will succeed sooner or later ... Hope for all good things which you expect from the divine mercy with a confidence as certain as if you already possessed them; but rest your hope on God’s goodness and God’s fidelity to his promises.” (Maxim XII, 2-3)

intention

“Seek in everything you do that God be content and nothing else.” (Maxim IV, 7)

“It is a great illusion on the part of some zealous persons to want to do everything themselves or to have it done by their associates, and to be unable to tolerate that others succeed in their undertakings and in the care they take to make God known and glorified. Take care that God alone be the end and the beginning of your undertakings.” (Maxim IV, 4-5)

“Rejoice in all things.”

(Maxim IV, 4)

JOY

“God’s judgments are so different than human judgments. So bless God with a spirit full of joy whenever you are forsaken, disdained, contradicted or little esteemed by others.”

(Maxim III, 3)

kindness

“Always have a good opinion of others; always speak well of them; excuse and conceal as best you can all the wrong you might see in them; always be kind to others and never be unkind to anyone.”

(Maxim VIII, 4)

LOVE

“The better to explain this maxim see to it that your love for God has the following qualities: Let your love be unifying. Let your love be unselfish. Let your love be communicative. Let your love be active.”

(Maxim IX, 4-7)

“Love God not only in word or in the experience of some tender moment of love but also in deed and in truth.”

(Maxim IX, 11)

mercy

“The true motto of a person whom God mercifully chooses to use for his glory or on whom he showers his loving blessing should be this of St. Paul: “I am what I am by the grace of my God,” or that of St. Teresa: “I will forever sing the mercies of God ...

Await the moment of grace in peace and when it comes, follow with great gentleness and courage.” (Maxim VI)

neighbor mindedness

“Let your charity toward your neighbor be patient, beneficent, and totally obliging; bear no trace of bitterness or animosity.”

(Maxim VIII, 3)

“Always have a good opinion of others; always speak well of them; excuse and conceal as best you can all the wrong you might see in them; always be kind to others and never be unkind to anyone.”

(Maxim VIII, 4)

“Interpret all things kindly and in the best way in which they can be interpreted.” (Maxim VIII, 6)

Overeagerness

“Great persons do everything in great peace; they are like the flowing of the greatest and deepest rivers which, noiselessly and without the slightest hurry, run with unusual swiftness carrying great vessels, enriching and making fertile many lands. Shallow persons are like small streams that make much noise over pebbles and yet carry little water and are of little use to the lands they touch; often in time of drought their waters eventually dry up. This is the symbol of shallow persons and the true character of their futile overeagerness in trifling undertaking and works.”

(Maxim XIII, 13)

quiescence

“Calmly yet energetically continue to the end what you have determined and prudently judged to be in accordance with the greater glory of God.”

(Maxim XI, 6)

“Let your relationships with others be marked by a pleasant and gracious seriousness which there is neither unrestraint nor too much constraint, and seek relaxation, as indeed you should, at the proper time.

The bow that is always taut will soon snap. (Maxim XIII, 8)

PEACE

“Do not become entangled in too many things at once: if, through some demand of your work, you have several things to attend to, never be anxious about finishing some in order to work at others. This anxiety troubles peace of heart, causes forgetfulness of God’s presence ... Whoever readily lets God act in him/her without too much interference from self does a great many things in a short time and never loses peace of heart.” (Maxim VIII)

recollection

“Recollect yourself frequently in God and do everything in God’s presence.”

(Maxim XIV, 6)

“Take care to use time fruitfully; it is precious and its loss irreparable.” (Maxim XIV, 1)

“Remember in living your life to give yourself seriously and wholeheartedly to the present without distracting yourself about the future, a common illusion to divert you from attention required for your present actions.” (Maxim XIV, 5)

Service

“Declare firmly in honor of the glorious St. Joseph that you will serve and love Jesus and Mary wholeheartedly as he served and loved them, and that when you serve the neighbor, you will do so in Joseph’s spirit of humility, gentleness and charity.”
(Conclusion of the Maxims)

“Do not be content with welcoming opportunities to serve when they arise; carefully and promptly seek them out yourself in order to imitate more perfectly your heavenly Father.” (Maxim VIII, 5)

truth

“Believe the truths of the Gospel with an even stronger faith when they are more difficult to understand: but believe them with a living faith which grasps, as is necessary, the unutterable and awesome mysteries of God.”

(Maxim XIII, 1)

Vocation

“Have always in sight the great end of your Christian commitment; see your particular vocation and the movement of divine grace which draws you gently and firmly to live the great virtue; and do nothing which might distance you from or make you undeserving of the graces which God in God’s goodness has been favoring you perhaps for some time and with little fruitfulness.”

(Maxim I, 1)

WORK

“When you work for others, have a very unselfish love which expects no reward for its services: presume rather that you will receive only ingratitude, which happens often enough; thus in helping the neighbor you will grow accustomed to seeking only the good of serving the neighbor and pleasing God at the same time.”

(Maxim VIII, 9)

xenophilia

EMBRACE OF THAT WHICH IS STRANGE OR DIFFERENT.

“Have for God an expansive love which includes all that love is capable of and all that a heart can love in God and for God; an exalted love full of purpose and ardor, transcending the mass of creature; a profound heartfelt love which is at your heart’s center and cannot be uprooted by any created power.”

(Maxim IX, 2)

Yourseli

“Never complain except about yourself; always accuse yourself and excuse others.”
(Maxim III, 7)

“Never speak of yourself, whether for good or for ill, without real necessity, in which case you will try to bring much simplicity and prudence to what you have to say so that you contribute nothing untimely or vain.”
(Maxim III, 5)

ZEAL

“As for your zeal, it will always be proportionate to the love of God in your heart; see that it springs from great love and it will be great.”

(Maxim XI, 1)

“Embrace, at least in desire, the conversion and sanctification of the whole world and do so with generous courage.”

(Maxim XI, 2)

courage

**“Be courageous in all undertakings. Never give up no matter what opposition you may encounter. Unless you are completely unable to do anything more about them.
(Maxim XI, 5)**

Jean Pierre Medaille, SJ



MAXIMS OF PERFECTION

**by Jean Pierre Medaille, S.J.,
the first spiritual director
of the Sisters of St. Joseph
(LePuy, France 1650)**

**Sisters of St. Joseph
of Carondelet
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