

*RESPONDING TO
THE MAXIMS: A SPIRITUALITY REVISITED*

*by
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*Based on the
Maxims of Perfection
of
Jean-Pierre Médaille, S.J.*

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FOREWORD

The "Maxims of Perfection" of Jesuit Father Jean-Pierre Médaille, a person instrumental in the foundation of the Sisters of St. Joseph, were written in France sometime in the 17th century.

In 1978, an intercongregational research team, commissioned by the Federation of Sisters of Saint Joseph in the U.S.A. and directed by M. Nepper, SJ, undertook a translation of those maxims into the English language. Entitled "Maxims of Perfection for Those Who Aspire to Great Virtue," the work was published in 1979 by McCarthy Printing Corp., Erie, Pennsylvania.

This present rendering, based on that work, is in reality a response to the challenge of these maxims rather than a further translation. It is the fruit of many hours that stretched into weeks and years -- hours of serious reflection and prayer by a Sister of St. Joseph who is trying to live those Maxims in 20th century America.

The culture, the language, and the understanding of science and theology have evolved significantly since the day Jean-Pierre Médaille sat down to put in writing his thoughts on living "the great virtue." At a retreat on the Maxims several years ago, those of us participating were encouraged to get beyond Médaille's written words and try to hear with our own hearts what the message really held.

It was then that I began my own reflection and response. I worked on the first two chapters during that retreat and shared them with the others present. As I reflected again and again on those chapters, I found that my attitude toward the Maxims was beginning to change. Considerable time passed, however, before I returned to my efforts to get at the heart of the message and to place it in a contemporary context that would take into account current advances in the behavioral sciences and in theology.

At the urging of Jane DeLisle, CSJ, a Sister of St. Joseph of Orange (CA), I eventually resumed the work. It was with the encouragement of Eileen McNerney, CSJ, and many other Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange that I have now brought it to completion. I offer my deepest gratitude for their support. My thanks go also to Norm Anderson, who assisted with the publication, obtained the copyright and took care of the many details of printing. This effort has brought me innumerable blessings that I could never have foreseen and graces for which I can never be sufficiently grateful.

My prayer is that a renewed interest in the Maxims will be a source of similar graces for all who read them and consequently a spiritual benefit to all sisters of St. Joseph and to their associates.



Every effort has been made to use inclusive language. This has been done except in cases where the meaning or the smooth flow of language would have been interrupted.

THE VISION ANIMATING A SISTER OF ST. JOSEPH

CHAPTER I MAKING CONSCIOUS CHOICES

1. The vision that gives life to my spirit, that moves me to act, to live out my commitment as a baptized Christian, as a vowed woman in the Church, is a vision of perfect -- i.e. full, complete, total LOVE. I wish to respond to the love that God, in divine mercy and boundless love, has shown and continues to show me each moment of my life. To do this I shall strive to be ever more conscious, increasingly aware of the love that is poured out on me, and that is so taken for granted. Only the conscious awareness of God's gifts can awaken in me the desire to love and to give in return.
2. My deepest desire is to live out of the awareness of God's gifts and to respond by always courageously choosing to live what I will discern to be the most loving response to each circumstance as it presents itself, for this is what will bring the greatest fulfillment to me and those around me.
3. Recognizing that I am not my own, but I belong to God, I will seek to act out of a true love of self, choosing only, to the best of my ability, those things that are good for me in body, mind, and spirit. In the same way, recognizing that all persons and all of creation belongs to God, I will act out of respect and selfless love in all my encounters with others and in all that affects the world around me.
4. Furthermore, recognizing that though great in the eyes of God because of God's love for me, I am, in fact, a very small part of this universe and for the most part, my life is made up of very small deeds. I will attempt to make the least action great by choosing it consciously out of love and accomplishing it as well as I possibly can--always with the intention of pleasing God who loves me very much.
5. In a spirit of love and gratitude, I will graciously, lovingly, and as much as possible, joyfully, accept whatever suffering comes to me from the brokenness of the human condition, and will, as the Spirit moves and strengthens me, choose to suffer with others in their service, as Jesus modeled for us by His life.
6. In order to strengthen my desire to grow to full maturity, to come to the fullness of God's love and life in me, I will spend time each day in the contemplation of God as revealed to me in Scripture, and I will practice daily the examen of consciousness.

CHAPTER 2
MEANS TO MOVE TOWARD FULLNESS
OF LIFE AND LOVE

1. I begin with the decision to practice complete honesty, accepting who I am presently, as well as how I came to be who I am, including genetic makeup, family history, cultural background, personal experiences--both of grace and of sinfulness -- freeing myself of burdens of guilt, unreasonable fears, and addictive behavior. Only in accepting the truth of who I am, can I open myself to receiving the truth of God's mysterious and loving action in my life.
2. I will empty myself of the addictive need to be loved and appreciated, and then my empty heart will be free to receive the fullness of God's love and appreciation which, paradoxically, will often come to me through people.
3. I will discipline myself, using whatever means I can to correct whatever tendencies may be in me that might imperceptibly lead to my alienation from God and from others. I will allow myself to be led by reason and grace in God's peace.
4. Recognizing that, as Jesus pointed out, "No one is good but God alone," I will not allow myself to be discouraged at my sinful tendencies or my shadow side, but will recognize it for what it really is and will come to terms with it. Neither will I allow myself to wear a mask or pretend to be what I really am not. I will acknowledge honestly the duality in myself and bring to Jesus each day, with great trust, that part of me that needs healing.
5. Through the patient, gentle healing action of Jesus in me, I will become a countercultural force in an often violent, greedy, self-centered consumer society. I will work for peace and justice in simplicity and love.
6. I will strive to be, as was Jesus, a person who goes about doing good, even were it to cost me suffering or death.
7. In all of this I shall have no other intention than that of Jesus himself: that the Father may be glorified and the world may be saved. In this same spirit, I will frequently pause during the day to adore, admire, glorify, reverence, and love God, and in so doing will draw energy from the Holy Spirit who draws me to the fullness of love.

CHAPTER 3
SOME OTHER MORE SPECIFIC MEANS:
HUMILITY

1. I will constantly focus on God who stripped Himself of all power -- of His "Godness" -- to become human, i.e. vulnerable and powerless.

2. In order to become like God, I will seek to strip myself of all pretensions to power, recognizing the illusions I often entertain of being better than I am. I will recognize that even my best deeds are often tainted by self-centered motives.
3. As a result of this awareness, I will stand before God and others in total truthfulness. I will recognize that I am, in truth, not deserving of all the good that comes my way, but that all is a gift. And when bad things happen to me, I will be proud to share the lot of Christ and the saints who modeled themselves after Him. I will recall that God's thoughts are not my thoughts, and God's will is to be preferred above all else. In the midst of suffering and humiliation, I will continue to bless God joyfully.
4. Whatever the undertaking, I will begin by centering myself in the truth that the outcome is not dependent upon me, but upon God. Then, in complete trust in the power of God to act, I will work diligently as though the outcome depended upon me.
5. I will speak about myself simply and prudently, as I see the need. I will do so in such a way as to contribute to the betterment of others...but mostly, I will listen.
6. I will work diligently at learning to know my true self, realizing that the inner journey is the longest and most difficult journey one could ever undertake and it will not end until I am face to face with God.
7. I will be wary of laying blame on others for ills that befall me. I will make every effort to look first at myself for the source of the problem.
8. I will remember to express my gratitude to God for all the good accomplished through me. It is by my incorporation into the life, death, and resurrection of Christ Jesus that I live, and so it is through His power that all good is accomplished. I am but the conduit through which grace flows.
9. Furthermore, I will reflect frequently on the fact that God requires my total cooperation to accomplish the good He has promised.
10. Moreover, I will remember that the total living out of my life can be a powerful force for good or evil.
11. I will rejoice in the good fortune of others.
12. I will be happy to recognize God's power at work in the lives of others and will rejoice in their gifts of intelligence, power, and influence, even if they are greater than mine, recognizing that the accomplishment of God's work and God's glory is all that matters.
13. In my search for self-knowledge, I will observe the rules of modesty, simplicity, charity, humility, and prudence in dealing with my spiritual director and with others who can help me to grow. I will not avoid the shadow side of my personality, but I will place my whole self before God, beg for and await God's healing action.
14. The awareness that my good desires and intentions can be - and often are - tainted by self-love will keep me humble and watchful.

15. It will be a pleasure for me to see others credited with good works to which I have devoted much time and effort. The glory is the Lord's!
16. Whenever I experience God's presence in my life -- whether it be during times of contemplative prayer, or during times of intense activity -- I will breathe a prayer of thanks, knowing that this is a pure gift of which I could never be worthy.

CHAPTER 4 ***FOCUSING ON GOD ALONE***

1. My sole ambition is to please God in all that I think and say and do. Nothing else matters.
2. To be liked and to feel needed are earthly rewards, but they are as nothing compared to the rewards God has prepared for those who love unconditionally.
3. I will try to act, then, with God alone in mind. If all that I do is aimed at pleasing God, I will not be upset or hurt when my efforts go unnoticed by others.
4. That God be glorified is my ultimate goal. How and by whom this is accomplished is secondary. Therefore, I will rejoice whenever I see others engaged in good works that glorify God. I will strive to be aware of my "savior complex." My desire to do good can easily turn into a desire to be praised for the good I do, and thus diminish the glory and praise that is God's due.
5. In order to avoid centering on myself, I will strive to develop a personal relationship with God so that I begin and end all my undertakings in God's name, knowing that true success in God's eyes may look like failure in mine. I will recognize and love God's will whatever the outcome of my undertakings.
6. It is easy to take comfort and satisfaction in one's efforts to help others, especially if one seems to be succeeding. Jesus, too, rejoiced in helping others, but this joy was expressed in praise and thanksgiving to the Father. I will strive to imitate the manner of Jesus and remember to express my thanks to God for all the good accomplished through me.
7. In short, I will seek to please God always in all things pleasant or unpleasant. I will live a life of total dedication to God and neighbor.

CHAPTER 5 ***PATIENT ENDURANCE***

Since I belong totally to God and am filled with gratitude and love as I reflect the Spirit's action in my life, I am ready and willing to receive whatever God sends my way. Suffering is part of the human condition, so I shouldn't be surprised when it becomes part of my experience. I will strive to endure it with patience and out of love for a God who loves me so much. Like Jesus who

lived, suffered, and died out of love, I will try to endure patiently all the sufferings -- large or small -- that come my way. Like Jesus, too, my suffering may at times cause me to cry, and even to pray for relief, but always in accordance with the will of God.

I will be watchful so as not to fall into the habit of murmuring or complaining, but rather will seek to develop a joyful spirit, for joy is not incompatible with suffering. Actually, suffering endured out of love is no longer suffering. I will develop a grateful heart, recognizing how gifted I am and knowing that I can never love enough. Finally, I recognize that, through my own human weaknesses, I bring upon myself much of my own suffering and so I will try not to blame others for evils that befall me.

CHAPTER 6 ***DEVELOPING A LISTENING HEART***

Discerning the will of God as I journey through this life is the most important and perhaps the most trying task I will ever encounter -- and yet one in which I am constantly engaged. Choices are always before me and saying "yes" to one thing is saying "no" to a multitude of others. Moreover, most choices involve, in one way or another, other human beings. They involve others in more ways than one. Perhaps most important, it is frequently through other persons and events that Divine Providence leads me. This major task of my life -- discerning and living God's will for me -- has its foundation in faith and trust.

I believe that God is present to me and to our world, and as stated through the prophet, "My plans for you are for good and not for ill." How attentive am I to those plans? It is so much easier to listen to my own whims and petty interests than to be attentive to the will of God as it is revealed to me daily through the people and events that surround me.

In discerning God's will for me, especially in major decisions such as employment, living situations, etc., it is important that I listen attentively to what my heart is saying to me, but it is equally important that I consult with others who may have a better view of "the bigger picture" and can help me to see how my decisions will affect the greater good.

I must also recognize that the unfolding of God's plan for me does not necessarily follow my time schedule. Grace, like yeast, works slowly, and I must be patient. Listening and cooperating with the prompting of the Holy Spirit on a daily basis is the best preparation for "hearing" and following when God beckons "Come, follow me."

I am what I am by the grace of God. How important it is then, that I be faithful in responding to that grace. Resisting the urgings of the Holy Spirit even in small matters can seriously interfere with God's plans for me and for the world. This thought keeps me praying for the willingness to develop a listening heart and the courage to do what I know is God's will.

CHAPTER 7 ***PEACE AND GENTLENESS***

In a world where people are so often at war with one another, I will strive to live as Jesus lived: in peace and gentleness of heart. If I keep in touch with God and see God acting in my life and in the world around me, I will be able to avoid haste and overeagerness, which are signs of unrest, and to suffer disappointments with serenity.

To abandon myself completely to God's will requires no small effort on my part. It means doing all I do for God's glory: being, like Paul, content having much or having little; being constantly watchful to control my emotions and passions and avoiding excessive fear and scruples.

Moreover, I will develop the habit of seeing all difficulties as challenges and opportunities for growth rather than as obstacles and will approach them with enthusiasm and confidence.

I must recognize that time is a precious gift, and to use it well I must avoid anxiety about accomplishing many things. "Martha, Martha, you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed." (Luke 10:41-42) The secret to maintaining my equanimity lies in the conviction that I am doing God's work and I need only let God act in and through me. This means living in the "now" and taking one thing at a time. If I can truly develop the habit of living in God's presence and relying on God's strength, I will find that I accomplish many things in a short time and I will not lose peace of heart.

CHAPTER 8

CARING FOR OTHERS

1. I will strive to love my neighbor as myself; I will try to love others as Jesus has loved me, remembering that we are all children of God and members of the mystical Body with Jesus as its Head.
2. Living in union with God means loving others unconditionally and consistently and, when the need arises, spending myself for others as Christ spent himself for me.
3. St. Paul tells me what this kind of love looks like. It is patient, seeks only what is good for others, is totally obliging, with no trace of bitterness or animosity and with no unfavorable or rash judgments. I will try to avoid any sign of coldness and any words or gestures that might be in the least way offensive. In other words, I will practice justice in the Biblical sense of the word, doing to others only what I would want them to do to me, and not doing to them anything I would not want them to do to me.
4. I will try to see others ways in a favorable light and will speak only well of them. I will try never to be unkind to anyone, though true charity may sometimes oblige me to confront persons whose behavior is harmful to themselves and/or to others. In these circumstances, I will act only after praying for the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
5. I will forgive all injuries in keeping with the exhortation of Jesus, "You must be made perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect." (Matt.5:48) I will especially practice charity toward those I consider my enemies, those who are least friendly, those who hurt me. I will look for opportunities to be of service to them.

6. Recognizing how easy it is to misinterpret the behavior of others, I will make it a practice to see persons and events in a positive light.
7. Always in keeping with common sense and good judgment, and seeking only to please God, I will try to be obliging toward others. In other words, in matters that do not involve morality, values, or principles, but are only matters of preference, I will try to act in a way that is pleasing to others, and when this is not in keeping with my personal preferences, I will try not to show it.
8. In seeking what is of greater benefit to others, I will try to remember the words of Jesus, "I promise you that whoever gives a cup of cold water to one of these lowly ones because he is a disciple will not want for his reward." (Matt.10:42) I will serve others as I would serve Jesus or Mary.
9. Though Jesus promises reward for our service to others, I will not expect that reward in this life. Very often what I will receive will be only ingratitude. This will not discourage me if I keep my eyes fixed on Jesus and seek only to please God by being of service to my neighbor. This must remain my goal.
10. When there are many tasks to be accomplished and I am free to choose among them, I will, when appropriate, choose the more menial and let others enjoy the more honorable tasks.

CHAPTER 9

LOVE OF GOD

1. I wish to remember that God's command is to love with my whole heart and soul, and my whole strength.
2. My love for God, then, will be expansive, fervent, and transcendent:
 - expansive: always growing, stretching, and capable of more;
 - fervent: ardent and purposeful;
 - transcendent: able to rise above natural preoccupations

It must be a love that is so profound that it cannot be uprooted by any created power.

3. I will pray that the Holy Spirit, who is all love, will fill me and possess me, that I may love God purely, unselfishly, and as perfectly as possible.
4. The love that I have for God must be a unifying love, one that keeps me united to my Creator in all that I think and say and do.
5. This love will express itself in an unselfish giving of myself to the pursuit of God's glory , which requires self-emptying on my part.

6. In prayer, I will give myself unreservedly to God, allowing myself to be drawn into ever greater union with the Divine.
7. As any relationship must be nurtured in order to deepen, I will do all in my power to keep the fire of my love burning through repeated acts of love, both in word and in deed.
8. I will be attentive to the least inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and will try to be faithful and generous in taking advantage of the opportunities that arise for the practice of virtue.
9. In all that I do, in all of my encounters with others, whether at work or at play, I will have a passionate desire to bring to God more love, more pleasure, more glory than even the greatest saints.
10. When I seem to be loved and appreciated by others, I will first thank God for this blessing, then will ask that others see in me only a reflection of God's love for them, and that they return this love. I will pray that all persons recognize that God has given us each other that we may help each other to come to our goal: union with the Eternal One.
11. I must be so convinced of God's love for me and of my love for God that I am able to say with St. Paul, "Who will separate me from the love of my God and of Christ Jesus ... I am certain that hunger, nakedness, persecution, the sword, and the like will never separate me from it."
12. Without taking a "holier than thou" attitude, I must nevertheless never be ashamed of my commitment to the love and service of God and neighbor and must avoid compromising my convictions out of human considerations.
13. I must be convinced that my love for God can and must continually increase. I will attain the fullness of love only when I finally reach eternity. In the meantime, like Therese of Lisieux, I must constantly desire Love.

CHAPTER 10

MAINTAINING PEACE OF SOUL

1. In order to become the best I can be--as God intends me to be--I will strive to:
 - a. Desire little in this world, and what I do desire I will desire very little.
 - b. Be aware of my feelings and examine carefully any desire that disturbs my inner peace and distracts me from the work I am called to do.
 - c. Recognize the difference between things I merely want and those I really need and trust God to care for these needs.
 - d. Remember that God has a plan for me and it is for good and not for evil; therefore, I will plan for the future only to the extent that it is necessary to my ministry.
 - e. Bear in mind that all things work for the good of those who love God, and so I will lovingly accept the "bad" along with the "good": health or illness, happiness or sadness, loving concern or indifference, living or dying. In other words, I will try to see every occurrence as a gift of Love.

- f. Continually improve intellectually, physically, spiritually that God may be glorified in me both in time and in eternity.
2. Briefly put: I must be so determined to live out God's plan for me that I do not allow myself to entertain the slightest temptation to the contrary.
3. In whatever happens to me and/or in the world around me, I believe that God's Will will prevail in the end, and so I will lovingly comply with what is asked of me, provided it be in keeping with that Holy Will.
4. And finally, in a spirit of total abandonment into the hands of God and acceptance of the circumstances in which I find myself, I will seek to maintain my peace of soul while accomplishing my duty to the best of my ability.

CHAPTER II

ENTHUSIASM FOR GOD'S CAUSE

1. My enthusiasm and the energy I expend for God's cause are proportionate to the love for God I have in my heart. If I am "madly in love," I will do great things for God.
2. I must nourish and allow myself to be absorbed by an intense desire for the conversion and salvation of the whole world, much like the saints of old. I must also have the courage and the generosity to undertake whatever needs to be done and to suffer the consequences, always allowing God to carry out His plans in and through me in true humility.
3. When circumstances -- whatever they may be -- do not allow me to be active in service, my faith, hope and love will be sufficient to sustain me:

FAITH in God who told us, "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent." (John 6:29)

HOPE (trust) that my entire life, useless as it may appear to others, and often to me, is in fact an acceptable offering for the salvation of the world, when joined to the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

LOVE for the God who draws me ever closer to my eternal destiny.

4. I will continually remind myself that it is not what I do (my talents), but who I am (my gifts) that will affect the lives of the people around me. God's blessings reach others through my gifts of peace, joy, forgiveness, love, patience and friendship.
5. Just as I must be generous in responding to what I perceive to be God's Will and courage in undertaking the task to which I feel called, so must I be persevering--not giving up easily in the face of opposition or difficulties.

6. I will persevere calmly and energetically in whatever tasks I have begun in order to bring them to a successful conclusion, unless I have clear indications that they do not serve God's glory.
7. Aside from Jesus, who is always my ultimate model, the great apostle Paul can teach me much about prudence, sincerity, enthusiasm, selflessness, and constancy.

CHAPTER 12

HOPE MAY BE SPELLED "T-R-U-S-T"

1. There are times in life when nothing anyone says or does is helpful. The sorrow, the pain, the anguish remain. It is at such times that my trust in God can deepen. I may ask that God deliver me, comfort me, give me success, but if my trust is strong enough, I might simply ask that God do in me and with me whatever is best, for my strength is in the Almighty.
2. The difficulties, contradictions and frustrations I meet in carrying out my responsibilities are meant to strengthen me. I will not yield to fear or discouragement, but when it seems that everything should throw me into total despair, it is then that I will hope for everything from the goodness of God, knowing that if my work is truly God's work, it will go on and nothing will be able to change that. On the other hand, if my work is not part of God's plan, it should and will come to an end. In either case, I will remain undisturbed.
3. My hope rests in a God who is good and faithful to promises, but who will not force an entrance into my heart. God's graces and blessings are there for me at every moment; the only thing required of me is awareness and receptiveness. This demands of me constant vigilance, constant prayer.

CHAPTER 13

LIVING OUT THE VISION

1. Gospel values are the foundation on which my life rests. This demands a faith that goes far beyond understanding, for the mysteries of the Gospel are indeed awesome!
2. Life requires of me that I make hard choices. However, if I weigh time against eternity and temporary losses against eternal losses, I will always choose God's Will, even when it means suffering losses or enduring painful trials.
3. I will strive to use my imagination and all my senses responsibly.
4. Likewise I will seek to use my memory, understanding, and will in the service of God and others.
5. The selection of a spiritual director requires the guidance of the Holy Spirit, as does every other important decision in life. My prayer is that God will always place in my life the person(s) who can best accompany, inspire, and guide me at given moments. In my sincere search for God's Will for me, I will candidly seek advice and guidance and generously do what I know to be God's Will for me.

6. Aware of how easy it is to be misled and to allow my pride to lead me down the wrong path, I will be cautious and seriously question my motivation in whatever circumstances I find myself, especially if these appear to be out of the ordinary.
7. I will be careful not to act on whim or impulse, but to let love and right reason be my guide.
8. It is important that I be pleasant and gracious in my relationships with others, being neither too serious nor artificially exuberant. I will try to recognize my need for relaxation and seek it as the need arises, knowing that even Jesus took time out to visit with his friends in Bethany.
9. God is everything for me and God's greatest gift to me is Jesus, whom I love with a strong and tender love. I can never thank Him enough. I also owe much and am devoted to Mary, Joseph, and all the saints, as well as to the angels who watch over me.
10. Holiness means never losing sight of who God is and who I am. God is the source of all holiness. Whatever holiness God shares with me is pure gift and my thanksgiving will always fall short of what is due. I must never allow myself to be fooled into thinking that "I have arrived," because God showers special gifts on whomever, even the weak. Real holiness is known to God alone and is not something that should preoccupy me. My sole concern is to love God in the present and to continually thank God for everything.
11. There are certain facts I must reflect on frequently for they will keep me humble and nourish in me a healthy fear of God:
 - a. God's thoughts are not my thoughts; God's ways are not my ways.
 - b. Like Paul and all the saints, I am as capable of sin as the next person. "There, but for the grace of God, go I."
 - c. Salvation is from God. All is gift.
12. I will affirm daily my fundamental option for God. It is the one thing in my life that can and will remain constant.
13. Models are important to me. I need to notice and seek to follow the example of persons I consider great and who have a true impact on their surroundings. They are usually the people who consistently maintain their peace and seem always to have time for others. On the other hand, I need to avoid making the same mistakes as those I consider shallow, who make a great deal of noise, engaging in futile undertakings that have no positive impact on the lives they touch, and sometimes do great harm. A good analogy might be that of a deep river, as opposed to a trickling and sometimes dried-up stream.

CHAPTER 14

TIME MANAGEMENT

Time provides me with great opportunities. To make the best of them I will:

1. Make of my entire life, whether it be filled with routine activities or exceptional deeds, an act of the greatest love of which I am capable, with the sole intention of pleasing and glorifying God.
2. Seize every opportunity to express to God the love that is in my heart.
3. Reach for excellence in all that I do, remembering that what is worth doing is worth doing well. The greatest obstacle I have to overcome in this regard is the temptation to focus on the future instead of remaining in the present. God's will for me is here and now.
4. Take frequent one-minute breaks to remember that God is in me and I am in God.
5. Try to do all things in union with Jesus, uniting my intentions to His and hoping for and expecting all things to come to me through His divine goodness and intercession on my behalf, since the worth of all that I do comes from the merits of His life, death and resurrection.
6. Desire that all I ever do has its source only in Jesus, and that His Spirit animates my every thought, word, and action. He emphasized that union with Him is essential: He is the vine and I am the branch. He produces the fruit, I am the branch that carries the fruit to be plucked by those who desire it.
7. Strive to manifest His gentleness, peace, simplicity, and humility. I cannot fail provided I allow Jesus to really fill me.
8. Try, finally, to live in awareness of God's love and action in and through me, always desiring that each moment of my life be, in fact, an extension of the life of Jesus on this earth.

**DAILY PRAYER FOR ONE ATTEMPTING
TO LIVE THE MAXIMS**

O God, Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Source of all holiness, united to Jesus, Mary and Joseph, and all the saints, I dedicate myself to you.

To honor you, Father, I promise to seek always what I sincerely believe will please you most.

To honor and imitate you, Jesus, I strive to practice true humility, forgetting myself, and seeking always to love you more, and I will seek to overcome my shadow side, so that you may be born anew and live in me, my Savior.

To honor you, Holy Spirit, I will make every effort to live in true freedom, allowing myself to be filled with your love, that it may direct all my actions.

Mary, my Mother, you who lived faithfully God's plan for you, in your honor I will seek to be attentive and faithful to every movement of grace.

Joseph, you who loved and served Jesus and Mary so faithfully, in your honor I will try to serve and love Jesus and Mary as you did, and to serve the dear neighbor in a spirit of humility, gentleness, and charity.

Finally, I will bear in mind the example of all you saints and angels and seek your help in deepening my love of God and neighbor.

I resolve to:

- strongly and constantly seek peace and intimate union with you, my God;*
- practice true charity and patience with others;*
- work toward a total emptying of self that I may be filled with your life;*
- remember to practice the simplicity, gentleness, and moderation of the Gospel;*
- maintain an attitude of openness to your will; and*
- practice detachment, generosity, and above all purity of heart.*

All for your glory, my God! AMEN