

CONTENTS

PART II.

PRACTICES OF A LIFE OF PERFECTION

I.

Daily Practices.

Method of Life	“	625
Method of Life (2).	“	627
Method of Life (3).	“	633
Method of Life (4).	“	642
Manner of doing the Novitiate in the world.	“	655
Exercise of the Presence of God.	“	659
Daily Prayers	“	666
Intentions in reciting the Office.	“	667

PART II.

PRACTICES FOR A LIFE-OF-PERFECTION

I.

DAILY PRACTICES

METHOD OF LIFE¹

Until further orders, I shall sleep 6 hours; this done, I get up and before leaving the room, I shall seek Mary's protection, make the offering of the day's activity and a brief visit to the Holy Picture of Mary. After that, I shall go to Church and stay for an hour-and-a-half: first meditation then preparation and thanksgiving for Holy Communion. Back home, I shall first genuflect 10 times, then breakfast then the housework. At 13 o'clock² I shall pay a visit to Jesus in my room, and from 13 to 14 o'clock I shall keep perfect silence. After lunch I shall take the rest needed, in the manner indicated other times and after that, for half-an-hour, I shall recite the usual vocal prayers. At 17 o'clock I shall make 10 other genuflections, and at 18 a visit to Mary in my room.

¹ Drawn up in the Year 1824

² There was different way of counting the hours - at the time of Bartolomea - starting from sunset.

After prayer for half-an-hour, I shall work till about 22. In this last hour I keep strict silence, after which I shall make the other ten genuflections and then go for a visit to the Blessed Sacrament, and to the altar of Mary. Back home, I shall do what is required by obedience till after supper.

After the clearing up, I shall do spiritual reading for a quarter of an hour, followed by Holy Rosary, then retire to my bedroom. First thing to do there is to pay a visit to the image of Mary, then recite the usual prayers, commend myself to Jesus and Mary and rest peace fully.

Before lying down in bed, however, I shall note defects of pride, and, in bed, before falling asleep, I shall read some book of devotion for a $\frac{1}{4}$ of an hour.

Every hour I shall make 6 spiritual communions, kiss the Crucifix once, the picture of Mary and the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and utter 6 ejaculations.

On Sundays, Wednesdays and Fridays I shall do the *Way of the Cross* either in Church after lunch, if I can, or in the evening in the room. Three times every hour I shall offer my whole self to God most generously.

TO THE GREATER GLORY OF GOD

METHOD OF LIFE

which I resolve to follow by the grace of God¹

As a rule, I shall have six hours' sleep. On waking up I shall at once thank God for having watched over me in the night and ask him to be with me the coming day; I shall offer everything for his glory and beg him to help me bear patiently, or rather, gladly, all the crosses he has prepared for me that day. Then I shall commend myself to the Blessed Virgin Mary and place myself under her 'mantle'; I shall also commend myself to my Guardian Angel and to my beloved patron Saint Aloysius Gonzaga. Before leaving the room I shall meditate for an hour, and in Church I shall stay for another hour. First thing I do when I am back home is to pay a short visit, in my room, to the Crucified Lord and to Our Lady, during which I also make the usual 10 genuflections.

Then I have breakfast and carry out my duties most carefully till lunch time. After that, I shall rest for a while and if I am allowed, after finishing the housework, I shall also go for a walk along some quiet road.

¹ Most probably written in the Year 1825.

After this refreshing break, before I take up my needlework, I shall pay another visit in my room to Jesus and to Mary with 10 other genuflections, then I set myself to work with a will. During this time I will try to instil into the tender hearts of the pupils entrusted to my care norms of good behaviour; I shall do with them, every day, half-an-hour of instruction on our faith, starting at about 21¹. I will pray the Holy Rosary with them and will myself read out, or make one of them read out, the Spiritual reading. I will make the whole class recite the Prayers of the Christian, morning and afternoon. Every evening I shall pay a visit to the Blessed Sacrament and to the altar of Mary. After that, I shall do what is required by obedience till after supper; during this time I shall read the spiritual lesson, pray the Holy Rosary with my dear ones at home and then retire to my room. There I shall make 10 other genuflections and then spend half-an-hour or more in meditation followed by vocal prayers. For the Office of Our Lady, I shall walk about. Before going to bed I will make my examination of conscience and note down my defects of pride. In bed I shall do some more spiritual reading. As my beloved main Advocate is St Aloysius Gonzaga, I will do my best to imitate all his virtues, and in all that I do I will have his example as the most perfect mirror. I shall offer all my actions for the glory of God, one at a time. I shall remain as much as possible in the presence of God; as means to it, I shall make, every hour, 7 Spiritual Communions, say 7 ejaculations, pay two visits-in-spirit to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, two other

¹ See foot *Note* pg. 625.

visits to Mary; every hour I shall also make three acts of self-offering to the Lord, begging him to do of my whole being what is most pleasing to him.

All these things, however, I intend to do outside the time dedicated to prayer, particularly to meditation. In Church and in prayer time I will never raise my eyes; similarly, I will never look at persons of the opposite sex, not even my father, nor any woman extravagantly dressed up.

Since in the current circumstances I must talk, I will make up for it by speaking a good deal about God, and by avoiding useless words, I shall never talk about Confessors, either; I shall never speak ill of anybody, I will not bring excuses for myself, nor talk about myself, be it favourably or unfavourably. I will depend for everything on my Elders.

I will never complain of anything. In my dress (since my pride makes me careless about it) I will adjust to the wishes of others, and now and then I will put on things that look rather elegant. I will never let others guess my likes and dislikes, but gladly adjust to the wishes of others.

I will never let anyone know how much it costs me to teach, nor will I let anyone know of any sickness the Lord sends me, if there is no danger of making it worse by keeping silent about it. In food I will adjust to what is provided, and if I have to choose, I will always take what I like less; I will not eat anything without asking for it. I will never take wine at all, coffee just a little. I will never eat fruit except when I am told to.

I will seek quiet recollection as far as possible, and out in the streets I will maintain a grave, modest demeanour; on the main streets I will never raise my eyes; I will also avoid chatting with anyone. So too on my way to and from Church, I will not talk. I will often visit the sick, especially those who are poor and I will meet their needs as far as my own circumstances allow. I will always be calm and peaceful in heart, serene in countenance and pleasant in words and manners. I will always be ready to please everyone, never refusing to do any good turn to those who ask it. On all feast days I will give the usual instruction to the girls who gather around me so happily, and will do my best to instil in their hearts a love for virtue. I will pray hard to the Lord for sinners; every Monday I will offer my Holy Communion for them as well as the discipline. I will also pray for the souls in Purgatory, offering for the repose of their soul, every Tuesday, my Holy Communion and the discipline and the *Way of the Cross* on Sundays, Wednesdays and Fridays will also be for them.

I will have all due respect and at the same time trust and confidence in my Confessor; to Him I will frankly expose what is inside my heart; I will never do anything without his consent and I will obey him strictly, as I would obey God himself. Similarly, in obeying my Father I mean to obey God, in obeying my Mother I mean to obey the Blessed Virgin Mary, and in meeting the wishes and requests of my sister and of other persons of my age or younger, I mean to do it to my Guardian Angel and to St Aloysius Gonzaga. Every day I will go against my will at least three times and will make 5 other

acts of self-denial. Every day I will apply the discipline for the time of saying the *Miserere* and three *Hail Holy Queens*. On all Wednesdays and Fridays I will wear the penance chain when I receive Holy Communion and the penance bracelets every Saturday. For three hours on Fridays I will keep two pebbles in my shoes. I will fast on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. I will never eat nor drink in between meals.

Every night I will get up from bed and pay a visit to Jesus. I will make an act of love for God every time I hear someone blaspheme. When I enter the room or before leaving it I will kneel and ask Mary's blessing, and recite a *Hail Mary*. I will get busy in the house in work I can do and will never let others serve me. I will consider myself least of all and will be glad to be considered as such by others as well.

Every month I will observe a day of recollection with the monthly Confession and every year the annual Confession. I will do with great fervour all the usual Novenas during which, in addition to the ordinary practices, I will always do that of not talking except about things of devotion. I will make sure that I carry out my vows thoroughly well, especially that of seeking in all things what is most perfect. I will not give in to curiosity even about innocent things or about spiritual things, particularly about matters relating to Confessors.

Lastly, in all these things I will do my best to keep cheerful, never going about with a gloomy face. And so, if the Lord favours me with some cross, I will try to bear it gladly without letting any sign of suffering be seen and never telling

anyone about it, except my Confessor, should he want to know about it.

Finally, I bind myself to inform my Confessor of all failures to carry out each item mentioned above, thus making up with this mortification for the failings themselves.

Praised be Jesus Christ and Mary. Amen.

TO THE GREATER GLORY OF GOD. AMEN.

22 October 1826

SOME RESOLUTIONS

OR

METHOD OF LIFE DRAWN UP FOR MYSELF

My gracious Jesus, I'm afraid it is a long time now since I first understood that you want something important from me: in a word, that you want me to be a saint; but obstinate that I am, I have all this time been holding back by leading an ordinary, mediocre life; at this moment, however, I admit defeat; I want at all costs to become a saint: I want to lead a fervent life, a mortified life, in every way as you wish it to be. I beg you, my dear Jesus, enlighten my mind to undertake what is pleasing to you, and grant me the grace to carry out everything thoroughly well, relying on you alone. Amen.

A. I shall sleep the hours allotted to me: neither more nor less. As soon as I wake up I will turn to God with my whole heart and address to him those acts that his love will suggest to me; in particular I will promise to bear gladly the cross that is prepared for me that day. Then I will turn to Mary; I shall give her my heart, I will put myself under her mantle, I will kiss her devoutly and commend myself

earnestly to Her. I will also commend myself to my Guardian Angel, to St Aloysius Gonzaga and to all the Saints of Heaven, that through their prayer they may obtain for me a holy day.

- B. When I am appropriately and modestly dressed, I will recite, in my room or in Church, the Prayers of the Christian, and make an hour of meditation. I will always hear Mass with devotion, receive Holy Communion with deep fervour every time I am given permission, and in my prayer whatever form it may take, I will not lift my eyes ...
- C. On my return home I will get busy with my duties; I will carry them out promptly. In particular, I will do the humblest and meanest chores and I will always avoid being served by others in anything.
- D. After lunch, I will take a little rest for the glory of God, and this aim will always be kept in all that I do. I will pay a short visit to the Blessed Sacrament if I can; I will also make the examination of conscience before I start work ...
- E. After finishing my work and ordinary occupations, I will go to visit the Blessed Sacrament: then I will recite the usual vocal prayers for the day. I will visit the altar of Mary and will renew to Her my self-offering. On my way to and back from Church I will never talk needlessly, and in Church I will always remain in great devotion, never saying any word at all, nor lift my eyes ...
- F. On my return home I will carry on with my duties till after supper; with my family I will do the usual spiritual Reading,

then recite the Rosary on my knees, on the floor, and then withdraw to my room.

- G. As soon as I enter my room, I will greet the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the picture of Mary and the picture of the other Saints I have in it. I will then make half-an-hour meditation or more, followed by the Office of Our Lady. I will make my examination of conscience and all the acts of thanksgiving, self-offering, recommendation, love, etc. that God's love will suggest to me before I go to bed.
- H. Before I go to bed I will note down any failure to keep these resolutions and rules, and also my defects of pride.
- I. In bed, before I dispose myself to sleep, I will read for a while some devotional book and so fall asleep always with a good thought in mind.
- J. Every morning I will beg the Lord, just after Holy Communion, to form in me a secluded dwelling-place where even in the midst of my household work I can often withdraw and converse with him. I will do my best to remain in his presence as much as I can; I will say 6 ejaculations, make 6 Spiritual Communions, a spiritual visit to Jesus and another one to Mary; every hour I will also give them a loving kiss. When I cannot actually do it, I will send it to them through some Saint.
- K. Three times a day I will make 10 genuflections each time, and three visits in my room to the Crucified Lord and to the Blessed Virgin Mary.
- L. In teaching I will have no other aim than that of giving glory to God and doing good to my neighbour, and so, in giving

them the necessary instruction, I will also instil sound piety and devotion in the tender hearts of the little girls entrusted to my care. I will do with them every day half an hour of Religious Instruction, recite with them five decades of the Rosary and make one of them read out the Spiritual Lesson.

- M. With them and with everybody, particularly with my sister, I will be very gentle and also eager to please. However, human respect should not prevent me from correcting them when they make mistakes.
- N. I will never complain about anything, nor disclose to anyone the crosses God sends me, nor any sickness that is not dangerous (except to my Confessor if he wants to know of it).
- O. I will try not to let others know my own inclinations so that in all things I may do what is pleasing to others. As to food and clothing, I will always choose what I like less or just accept as charity what is given me by my elders.
- P. On the road, I will keep my eyes down, and in the main streets I will not stop to chat. Before setting out from home I will make the sign of the cross and commend myself to God. I will do the same thing before I start doing anything.
- Q. I will keep watch over my eyes, never staring at any man, whoever he may be, not even my Father, nor look closely at women dressed up in an ostentatious manner.
- R. I will also mind my tongue, never uttering any word that offends charity, nor saying useless words; in particular, I will avoid talking about Confessors, Confessions, etc.

- S. I will never inquire into other people's affairs, not even what practices of piety others do; On my part, I will be as diligent as I can without minding other people's business.
- T. I will never say any word of praise about myself, nor excuse my behaviour. I will always seek to remain hidden to others' eyes in order to be more pleasing to Jesus.
- U. I will patiently and gladly bear all sorts of insults, hurting words and whatever goes against my reputation.
- V. I will dearly love the poor. I will gladly talk with them; I will help them as much as I can afford, and three times a week I will put part of my food aside and give it to them.
- X. I will visit poor, sick people as frequently as I can: that is, once week.
- Y. I will have full trust in my Confessor; I will keep him informed of my inner life, and I will carry out carefully what he recommends.
- Z. Every Monday I will receive Holy Communion, and offer all that I do that day for the salvation of sinners. I will do the same on Tuesdays for the holy souls of Purgatory.

- AB. I will consecrate each day of the week with a special intention, that is: Sundays to *God the Father* that He may grant me a living faith, Mondays to God the Son, praying that He may grant me a firm hope; Tuesdays to the Holy Spirit, praying that He may grant me an ardent charity; Wednesdays to the Blessed Virgin Mary, that she may

obtain for me holy Purity. Thursdays to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, that He may grant me his holy love; Fridays to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Jesus Crucified, that He may grant me deep sorrow for my sins, and Saturdays again to Mary, my most gentle Mother, and on that day I will always observe some special practice in her honour.

AC. I will regularly do my annual Confession, monthly Confession and a Day of Recollection. I will carry out the prescribed practices in honour of Jesus Crucified the second Friday of every month, and similarly in honour of Mary the first Saturday of every month.

AD. On Sundays and feast-days, unless prevented for a serious reason, I will help illiterate young girls, at the same time instilling in them the practice of virtue.

AF. I will never seek for myself anything that is unnecessary, be it clothes or food; I will ask for what I need, from my parents, for charity's sake.

AG. I will never raise my voice when I talk, nor get upset, and I will also try to keep peace in the family.

AH. In obeying my Confessor I intend to obey my most gentle Spouse, Jesus; in obeying my Father I mean to obey my Guardian Angel; I will obey Our Lady in my Mother, my Advocate St Aloysius in my Sister, and all the Saints of Heaven in everybody else.

- AK. I will never refuse to do any service to anyone who asks it of me, whenever I can, never minding the trouble I have to take.
- AL. I will never say any useless word before Holy Communion; I will never talk about clothes, personal adornment, etc.
- AM. I will go against my will 5 times a day, and make 7 internal or external mortifications, and all those practices of penance permitted by my Confessor.
- AN. I will not think of males, speak to them or look at them without a precise need, and I will above all avoid their company.
- AP. I will remain as recollected as I can, avoiding useless words, and if I can, I will also observe (strict) silence for an hour every day.
- AQ. I will fully accept God's will; I will place myself in his arms as a loving child, and everything that happens to me, be it happy or sad, I will consider coming from his hands, and so I will always thank him for it.
- AR: I will never lay hands on anyone, not even in fun, nor even on little girls.
- AS. I will have deep respect and love for my Elders, but I will never demand that they have a preferential love for me. I will thus keep my heart detached from every creature in order to give it wholly to my God.
- AT. I will be pleasant and caring with everyone, and will always speak well of everyone; I will never dare to utter a single word or joke that may be harmful to my neighbour.

- AV. I will not hold on obstinately to my opinion, nor will I speak about myself, favourably or unfavourably.
- AX. I will neither eat nor drink in between meals; I will not eat titbits of any sort; as to fruit, coffee and wine, I will take only when I am told to.
- AY. My clothes will be plain and suitable; I will keep to the same dress except when I am told to change it.
- AZ. I will be constantly mindful of my dear vows, of those sweet chains that bind me so closely to Jesus; I will renew them often and do my best to carry them out in every detail.
- AE. I will always look upon my beloved Advocate St Aloysius Gonzaga; I will check my actions on his and in imitation of him do my best to become a saint.
- AI. With my most gentle Mother Mary, I will be perfectly at ease; I will turn to Her in every need, call upon her in temptation, and thanks to her, I am confident of going to Heaven.
- AO. I will go through this method every eight days; I will read it after Holy Communion in order to be able to make amends for my shortcomings.

My dear Jesus, I beg of you: let not this method be produced on the day of Judgement to blame me for my failure to carry it out, instead of a cause for rejoicing over it. Help me, I beg you, to do most faithfully what I have set myself, and if you expect other things from me, let me

understand it, for I am ready to do everything for your sake. Dear Mother, I leave this paper in your hand; enable me to carry it out.

St Aloysius, my Guardian Angel and all Saints in Heaven, pray much for me. Amen.

I herewith ask your permission, Reverend Father, to add to my Method of Life the few things below:

1. When the bell strikes the hour, or at the sound of any bell, I will pay a spiritual visit to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, in which, besides sentiments of affection and love, thanksgiving and supplication, etc. which God will graciously suggest to my heart, I will always do a spiritual Communion.
2. Every time I enter my room, I will pay homage to the Crucifix, to the image of Mary or to that of some other Saint, and if I am unable to do more, I will devoutly kiss them and bow to them with devotion.
3. Every hour I will call my conscience into account to God, and through a quick review I will see if in the past hour I have done anything displeasing to God, and promise him to do better, by his grace, in the next hour.
4. Every night I will get up from bed and make a visit to Jesus Crucified: I will do it for souls who sleep in mortal sin, praying Jesus Christ not to let them die in that state but to grant them forgiveness and a true conversion.

✠ PRAISED BE THE MOST BLESSED TRINITY. AMEN.

METHOD OF LIFE (1830)¹

My gentle Jesus, for a long time now, I'm afraid, I have been feeling sure that you expect something from me, and that you want me to be holy: but in my obstinacy I have responded to your sweet calling with ingratitude and sinfulness. From now on, however, I hope I will stop it, and from this point I am resolved to undertake a life-pattern entirely new and conforming to your most holy Will. Give me the light to undertake what you expect from me, and grant me also the grace to carry out everything faithfully, while I place my trust in you alone. Amen.

A. I will sleep 6² hours. As soon as I wake up I turn to God, and make to him acts of love, thanksgiving, self-offering, prayer, etc. I will at once offer him my readiness to bear

¹ In Bartolomea's paper, the year is not written, but we can deduce it from the fact that for the first time, for Year 1830, she uses new symbols to indicate the various items of this Method.

² Another copy of this document, written in Bartolomea's own hand, says: 7 hours.

gladly all the crosses that He will be pleased to send me that day, for my glory should be placed totally in the Cross, and I will consider lost any day that is not marked by It. When I have paid my respects to God I will turn to Mary: I will present her with my heart, placing myself under her mantle, I will kiss her devoutly and commend myself earnestly to Her. Then I will turn to my Guardian Angel, my beloved St Aloysius, to my Holy Advocates and all the Saints of Heaven, begging them to obtain for me a holy day.

- B. When I am modestly dressed, I will offer God my whole self and all the day's actions, and declare that I would rather die a thousand times than commit a single sin. I will say to myself, «This is the first day that I serve God, and perhaps it will be the last: there is nothing I would hesitate to do for His sake.» Then, in the room or in Church, I will recite the Prayers of the Christian and make meditation for an hour. I will always hear Holy Mass and receive Holy Communion with great devotion every time I am given permission. My morning prayer will thus take two hours in all.
- C. Back home, I will do the daily chores, with much care, especially the lowliest and meanest tasks, giving always preference to these rather than any particular practice of mine. I will avoid making others serve me; instead, I will do my best to serve others.
- D. After lunch I will rest for a little while; if I can, I will pay a short visit to the Blessed Sacrament, and before taking up

my Needlework I will also make my examination of conscience.

- E. Towards evening I will pay a visit to the Blessed Sacrament and to Mary's altar. During this visit I will recite as usual my daily vocal prayers and will see to it that I keep intimate company to Jesus in the Sacrament.
- F. Back home, I will carry on with my duties till after supper time, and then I will do with my dear ones at home the usual spiritual reading, recite the Holy Rosary and then I retire to my room.
- G. As soon as I enter it, I will greet with an ejaculation the Holy Picture of the Sacred Heart, that of Our Lady and those of the other Saints I have in it. I will meditate for half-an-hour. I will recite the Office of Our Lady and my other usual vocal prayers, make my examination of conscience and all the acts of thanksgiving, love, self-offering, prayers of intercession, etc. that God's love will prompt to me. Then I will spend some time in preparation for Holy Communion and I will rest in the wounds of Jesus and under the mantle of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
- H. Before going to bed, I will note down any failures in observing these practices, and mark defects of pride. In bed, before disposing myself to sleep, I will do some spiritual reading and try to fall asleep with some good thought in mind.
- I. Since I feel called to an intense interior life, I will seek all possible means to practise it. I will say many ejaculations and Communions-in-spirit.

I will always walk in the presence of God, that is; in every step, thoughts, words and actions I will always have God in mind, I will do everything for pure love for Him and for His glory, taking care to repeat this self-offering every time I change activity. In short, I will form a retreat in my own heart and there frequently retire to converse in a familiar manner with my God even in the midst of my daily occupations.

- J. Not only with Jesus will I intimately and frequently behave so, but also with Mary, with the Angels and Saints of Heaven, earnestly asking them to obtain for me the same blessedness they enjoy.
- K. I will never start doing anything without first praying God that he may graciously show me his will and give me the grace to carry it out well all through.
- L. I will do my utmost to deny my own will in everything, keeping my likings hidden from others in order to be better disposed to do as others wish. I will frequently say to myself: Holiness consists in giving up our own will. To get used to denying my own will, I will obey and be very glad to please even those 'inferior' to me, and consider myself by duty bound to obey everyone since I am the least of all.
- M. To practise obedience in a sweet manner, I will 'see' the Blessed Trinity every time I obey my Father, the Blessed

Virgin Mary when I obey my Mother, and all the Saints of Heaven when I obey anyone else. I will have towards my Parents the respect they deserve as persons who represent God himself; I will revere them, obey them, love them and help them as much as I can.

- N. I will have full trust in my Confessor. I will lay the state of my soul transparently clear before him, by mentioning: temptations, inspirations, wishes and actions, etc. In short, I will take scrupulous care not to hide from him even the tiniest things. And to have no ground for pride nor for fear, etc., I will always speak to Him as if I spoke and had to do with Jesus, my most gentle Spouse. And so, I will always accept any advice, warning, admonishment he gives me as given by God himself.
- O. I will have for Him and for the other Priests the respect due to their person as Ministers of the Lord, and so, never for any reason say any word that could offend them even in the slightest manner. Where there is no real need, I will avoid talking about any of them, especially about my Confessor, or of things relating to Confession.
- P. I will seek all means to do good to my neighbour, more especially to the girls. With these, I will be caring, pleasant and gentle; I will miss no opportunity to do them good.
- Q. In teaching I will have no other aim than that of doing good to my neighbour, and before that, to give glory to God. In the tender hearts of the young girls entrusted to my care, I

will strive to instil sound piety and devotion. I will cultivate these as much as I can. I will recite the Holy Rosary with them, and will make one of them do a bit of spiritual reading. On Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays I will hold a lesson with them, for an hour, in Religious Instruction. I will love all of them impartially and be equally concerned for them all; I will correct them gently and with much loving-kindness.

- R. I will love the poor dearly. I will gladly talk with them; I will help them as much as I can, and three times a week I will put some of my food by and give it to them. The sick will be particularly dear to me; all the time that is left free will be spent in going to see them, serve them and help them.
- S. I will also be most diligent in looking after the patients at the Hospital; I will do my utmost for their welfare as far as my limited strength will allow; in them and in other poor people, I will see the person of Jesus Christ himself, and so, I will do very gladly whatever I can do for their benefit.
- T. Three times a day I will make 10 genuflections each time to the Crucified Lord and 3 visits in my room to the Blessed Virgin Mary.
- U. On Mondays I will offer my Holy Communion for sinners and apply for their conversion the rest of the little good that I do on that day: the same thing I will do on Tuesdays for the holy souls in Purgatory.
- V. I will offer each day of the week with a special intention, that

is: Sundays to God the Father, Mondays to God the Son, Tuesdays to the Holy Spirit, Wednesdays to my Guardian Angel, Thursdays to the Blessed Sacrament, Fridays to the Crucified Lord and the Sacred Heart, Saturdays to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

- X Every year I will make my annual Confession, every month my monthly Confession and a Day of Recollection. I will observe the practices prescribed in honour of the Crucified Lord on the second Friday of each month, and those in honour of Mary on the first Saturday of each month.
- Y In my monthly Confession, I will either tell my Confessor my main fault and the resolutions that I take for the next month, or ask Him to tell it to me himself and to teach me how to overcome it.
- Z I will keep strict watch regarding my purity: I will therefore keep control over my eyes, never gazing at any man or at women pompously dressed up, carefully avoiding their company; on the road I will always keep my eyes cast down and I will avoid useless talk.
- AB. In Church and whenever I am praying, I will never raise my eyes, except when I really need to.
- AC. I will watch over my words, trying first to reflect on whether they were better be said or not. About others I will always speak favourably, and about myself, I will avoid speaking, be it in good or bad things.
- AD. I will never find excuses for myself; I will not hold on obstinately to my own opinion, nor will I speak favourably about myself.

- AF. I will not complain of anything; I will not let others notice little sicknesses that the Lord may be pleased to give me, and if he graciously grants me any cross, I will not tell anyone.
- AG. I will not satisfy my own curiosity uselessly, even in good things: thus freed from the things of this world, my heart will be taken up by God.
- AH. I will not speak at all before receiving Holy Communion, nor on my way to and from Church.
- AL. I will not, for any reason, speak of worldly things: about vanity, people getting married, wealth, earthy beauty, whiling away time, etc.
- AM. I will never refuse help to anyone who asks for it, if it is at all possible, even if I have to take trouble.
- AN. I will not lay hands on anybody, not even little girls, not even for fun.
- AP. I will surrender myself totally to God's will. I will relax in his arms like a loving child, and whatever happens to me, be it happy or sad, I will always accept as coming from his hands, and will thank him for it heartily, with equal pleasure.
- AQ. I will have great reverence and love towards all my Superiors/elders, but I will never try to be loved by them with partiality; in that way I will keep my heart detached from all, in order to offer it wholly to my God.
- AR. I will patiently and gladly bear insults, hurting words, what goes against my good reputation;

in fact, I will return good for wrong done to me, behaving with good grace with those who hurt me.

AS. Every day I will make 5 inner acts of self-denial, along with all those forms of penance which from time to time my Confessor allows me to carry out.

AT. I will never eat nor drink in between meals except when I am sick or, when I am in company, and cannot abstain without attracting attention. I will never eat choice food out of greediness; as to fruit, I will take only when I am told to, and always only a little. As to coffee and wine, I will take only what is necessary, and I will never get up from table without having made at least one mortification; in particular, I will always leave the table still a bit hungry.

AV. I will dress in a plain, modest and suitable way; as far as possible I will avoid wearing new clothes.

AX. I will carry out most diligently all my duties and my usual practices of piety, keeping as much as possible to the fixed time, place, manner, etc. In particular, I will give much importance to little things, attending to them with great care.

AY. I will always keep in mind my cherished vows: those sweet chains that bind me so strictly to my Divine Spouse: I will renew them frequently and do my best to carry them out faithfully.

AZ. Among all the virtues those I will have especially at heart and do my best to practise are: humility, gentleness, charity, obedience, chastity and inner silence.

- AE. I will keep my eyes on my beloved St Aloysius (*Luigino*); I will compare all my actions with his, and following his example I will strive to become a saint.
- AO. I will have an unbounded trust in Mary, my most gentle Mummy; I will turn to her in every need, call upon Her in times of temptation, I will love Her with all my heart, I will serve Her faithfully, and I will encourage others to love and honour Her; I will frequently kiss Her, and thanks to Her I hope to go to Heaven.
- AI. Once every eight days I will read this method, and I will read it after Holy Communion, so as to improve in those points I find lacking. Once every 3 months I will give an account of these to my Confessor.
- AA. Once a year, when I am not so busy, I will spend eight to ten days of spiritual exercises; during that time I will also undergo a particular Confession.
- AU. I will never call back to mind things I have done, nor ever talk of them with others. I will rather keep in mind my enormous sins and what I might commit if the Lord were to withdraw his grace from me. I will think of my meanness and unworthiness. I will never talk about myself not even with my closest friends except when charity demands it. If I am praised, I will skilfully change the subject if it is a friend, and if it is an Elder, I will keep silent and in my heart I will pray that the Lord may reveal my meanness to myself and to the person who has praised me.

When I know there are others hearing or observing me, I will, as much as possible, give up saying or doing what I had in mind or else do it in a way that will not merit praise.

AJ. In my outward demeanour I will present a life that has nothing extraordinary about it; I will be eager to please others in all things that do not offend God; I will not let others know of all my usual practices of piety that might make me seem exceptional, and in my dress I will avoid any hint of artificiality. I will not assert myself nor seek the company of conspicuous personalities; I will not try to outshine my friends, and if on some occasion I have to take the lead, I will do it in such a way that I have to depend on them in everything. In my letters I will be brief; I will not correct any mistakes I have made absentmindedly, and I will always make a few mistakes purposely. However, when charity or convenience require that I write at greater length, I will do so. I will not stand on my dignity nor allow special regard to be shown towards me; I will refrain from actions that might win me praise; I will rather do everything with the sole aim of giving glory to God. I will never talk about the tokens of courtesy or love that others have shown towards me, especially if these came from persons superior to me.

AK. I will frankly reveal to my Confessor thoughts of pride that I am especially ashamed of, and that I find hardest to tell. Once a week I will also mention one of these to some

friend of mine, especially among those who take me for a very spiritual person. Three times a day I will pray to Our Lady for the virtue of humility, and every morning I will hand to St Aloysius my pride, begging him to keep it in check and not let it offend God. Every day I will make 3 acts of humility, looking out for them with special care when circumstances do not present opportunities for them.

- W. Lastly, I will frequently remind myself that I am an unworthy servant, that of myself I have done nothing except sins deserving Hell, which yawns wide open at my feet; and in my meditation I will always seek to realize how weak, helpless and mean I am: but in a way that will not lessen my trust in God, nor weaken my enthusiasm, for that may make me lazy and negligent: on the contrary, the more conscious I am of my unworthiness and weakness, the more trustfully will I turn to God for help¹.
- X. Every time I enter my room I will pay homage to the Crucified Lord and to Our Lady, by genuflecting before them or saying an ejaculation or reciting a *Glory Be* and a *Hail Mary*.
- IO. Every hour I will look into the depths of my being and look out for any failing in the hour that is over and recommend myself to God and offering for his glory what I am about to do during the next hour.

¹ In the original Script of Bartolomea there is an “*Amen*”.

The following texts X.- IO. - CIO. - V. are not found in the original Script of Bartolomea. It is not known where Mazza has taken these texts from.

CIO. When the church bell strikes the hour, and every time I hear any bell, I will go in spirit to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament; I will offer him my whole being, I will speak to him very intimately and make a spiritual Holy Communion and some act of love of God.

W. Whenever I wake up during the night I will get up from bed and make a short visit to the Crucifix for a few minutes, recommending to Him sinners and all those souls who are on the point of death.

HAIL TO JESUS AND MARY

MANNER OF DOING THE NOVITIATE

IN THE WORLD¹

You must die to the world and to yourself: that is the essence of your Novitiate. By dying to the world you will be renewing the renunciation you have made to all that is worldly: honours, riches, garments, ornaments, amusements, useless friendships must all be banished from your life. You must not waste on them as much as a word, thought or action, however small, if it is not strictly necessary.

Keep ever in mind that you have given up all those things for the sake of your divine Spouse, and that you have chosen Him and his Cross as your sole heritage. And so, anything other than He and His Cross must be entirely banished from your heart. But that is still too little: you must, besides, die to yourself, to all your passions, to all your desires, inclinations etc.

¹ On 11 May 1828, in her inability to fulfil her desire to become a religious at once, Ven. B. Capitanio drew up a manner of living a sort of novitiate life though remaining at home.

All the persons you will be living with will be for you, as it were, your fellow-sisters in the Convent, and so treat everyone of them with gentleness, love, charity, and above all, perfect obedience. Have for your Elders sincere respect and obedience, seeing in their person, as it were, your Mother Superior. Keep in mind that you are the least among everyone, and so look out for opportunities of attending to the humblest and meanest tasks, in the house and outside. Keep a close watch on your defects, and with utter sincerity confess them to your Superior, so that you may receive from him instruction how to improve. Keep up your vows (which you will renew every morning in Holy Communion), your method of life and your duties with the utmost care, as if you were carrying out the *Rules* of your dear Convent.

Do not seek your own will in what you do, however small in itself, but depend entirely on your Superior and on your Parents. Do not show that you are tired or reluctant to carry out what you are commanded, even by those younger to you.

Above all, cultivate a complete abandonment of all you are and all you have in the Lord's hands. Look upon whatever happens to you as coming from Heaven, and it will be very dear and sweet to you. In circumstances you find hard to accept, remain constantly at peace and tranquil in heart, knowing for certain that your gentle Jesus allows everything to happen for your greater good. Let not even a single word of complaint ever come from your lips: that would not at all honour your Spouse who is all the time watching over you that

you may derive spiritual benefit from the things that happen to you. You will fully value your interior life by reminding yourself that God speaks to our heart and in solitude, and so prayer and a recollected mind will be your daily occupations. As to useless thoughts, you will not let them in, not even a single one; avoid useless words as long as no-one will take offence if you keep silent.

Regarding your activity, you shall ask your Superior kindly to give you the permission, month by month, to devote yourself as much as you can for the good of your neighbour, without sparing yourself any trouble, and if you obtain his permission you will consider it as the greatest grace granted you by God, enabling you to gain something for Heaven. However, you must remain cheerful all the same if your Superior tells you to lead a private life. Be ready to carry out any command of his, and to forego anything if he thinks that would be better, because in him you must see your beloved Jesus.

In all things, go against your own liking; remember that the Novitiate period is a hard time, not fun; and so, cherish the little crosses that the Lord will send you. Do your best to remain faithful to your Jesus, and so you will deserve to be favoured by Him with big crosses, which are, in fact, the most exquisite gifts that He can give to his beloved ones.

Strive to live by pure faith, seeking God's delight in all things. In prayer, in Holy Communion, in inner silence, do not seek consolations, but only the will of God.

Lastly, do your best, in all that you do and if possible in every

breath you take, to please the Lord and to do only what gives him delight.

To carry out all this, have great confidence in the Wounds of your beloved Jesus, in the loving-kindness of your most sweet Mother and in the assistance of your dear patron St Aloysius Gonzaga.

Amen.

HONOUR AND GLORY BE TO THE MOST HOLY TRINITY
HOMAGE AND LOVE TO JESUS CHRIST

PRACTICAL EXERCISE

TO MAKE IT EASIER TO REMAIN IN GOD'S PRESENCE

As soon as I wake up in the morning, I will feel the presence of my divine Spouse by my side, or rather, I will suppose he himself has called me to keep him company. I will therefore keep well-fixed in mind that in the Room, on the Road, in the Church, at Home and wherever I have to go, my dear Spouse is there following me, not to reproach or punish me, but to help me, comfort me and endow me with his grace, to save me from danger and keep up with me a constant exchange of love and affection. I will place myself at once in his hands, thank him for his constant, loving company, and on my part I will resolve by his grace never to lose sight of him.

After that, I will drive away from my mind and heart all thoughts of world, persons, material things, house duties etc., and I will suppose that there is nothing in the world except God and myself. All those things I will place in his most Sacred Heart and I will go and fetch them each time I have to attend to

them. I will then seek to do them for his sake, with him and as if he himself had ordained them.

Before I leave the room, I will throw myself totally into the embrace of Divine Providence and do my best to prepare myself for whatever may come, accepting everything gladly, even if that day should make me suffer Martyrdom. I will rejoice at the thought that God never leaves me alone, and that his Divine Presence will be of great support to me.

On setting out from the house and on my way to Church, I will ponder in my heart the Meditation I am about to make. I will do my best to free my mind and my heart from all useless thoughts, cares, fancies or worries, from fear and presumption, from feelings of pride and arrogance, and thus see to it that I enter the holy House of God quite alone, to converse with my divine Spouse who is there waiting for me.

On reaching the Church, I will make an act of Contrition. Then in spirit I will place myself before the throne of the Blessed Trinity; I will then show them my wounded spirit, beg them to accept me in all my unworthiness and admit me into their presence, and keep me in it, out of pure Love and compassion. I will then make an act of profound humility and in the depths of my nothingness I will adore God. After that, I will go to the Throne of Jesus Christ; I will entreat him to wash my soul clean in His Divine Blood and endow it with his infinite merits. There I will make an act of confidence in Jesus and diffidence in myself. I will then pray Mary to teach me and assist me in my prayer.

I will pray the Seraphim to lend me their own love so that my poor heart may be set aflame with it.

After that, quite relaxed in my God and relying on him alone, I will begin my Prayer. Like a poor *beggar*, I will stand at the door of the Heart of my Jesus. If, unmindful of my demerits, he graciously opens it and lets me into the furnace of his Love, I will surrender myself entirely to him; in silence I will listen to what he will kindly teach me and enjoy the peace and quiet of his sweet presence. I will try to keep all the powers of my soul quite still, that they may not disturb such a lovely 'Union'. If ever I feel dry in Prayer, and the Lord, quite rightly, keeps the door closed to me, I will humbly admit my unworthiness and try to rouse myself with some good reflection, taken from my book or kept in my mind.

The place chosen for my Meditation will be either at the foot of the Cross or at the door of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. In other words, I will generally meditate on the Passion of Jesus Christ or on the traits of his Sacred Heart, or else on the love of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament (except on Mondays, when I will meditate on Death, Judgement, Heaven and Hell). In the end, I will recite the *Te Deum* and make some useful resolution.

To be deserving of the grace of Union with God and of His unbroken presence, I will do my very best, on my part, to remove whatever may be hindering this noble Union and Virtue. First of all, I will try to examine myself thoroughly, and know of my meanness and unworthiness, of my countless defects and utter ingratitude. I will seek to be deeply

convinced that, were it not for the continual miracle of his grace, I would be the poorest, the most sinful of all, the most unworthy of any grace, and that any grace God grants me is entirely a proof of his Mercy, with no merit of my own.

As far as possible, I will keep hidden from the eyes of others whatever could put me in a better light; I will seek, without any affectation, the last place in everything. I will gladly accept to be put aside, forgotten, wronged or neglected, nor will I try to excuse myself if I am corrected. I would rather appear mean in the eyes of others so as to be dearer to God.

I will cut short every trivial talk or useless thought. I will keep my bodily senses under strict control; that is, where there is no question of bringing about God's glory or some real need, I will not raise an eye, speak a word or listen to any talk, nor take a step. I will pay no heed to my body. I will not listen to its complaints when I must use it to give glory to God.

As to its needs, whether it be in food or in clothing, I will place it all in the hands of divine Providence, accepting without demanding anything whatever my family offers me. In food, I will deny myself regarding both its quality and quantity: I will eat only what is strictly necessary lest I should make myself unable to pray.

As soon as my prayers are over, as a further help to remain in the presence of my divine Spouse, I will heed His voice calling me to my household duties and urging me to keep him pleasant company, assuring me, on his part, that He will never leave me alone, and telling me to do everything for

Him alone. With this Divine Lover by my side, I will leave the Church and make my way back home absorbed in holy thoughts. I will do everything with a will, lovingly and with the utmost care, because Jesus is watching me all the time. When I am busy doing housework, I will feel him beside me. When I am teaching, I will keep in mind that he is there to help me, to teach me, to give me patience, prudence, ardent love and kindness. If work wearies me or weighs me down, I will look at my dear Jesus and feel quite refreshed.

If I am at a loss what to do in order to give him greater pleasure or to be of use to my dear girls, a prayer to my divine Spouse will make it quite clear to me how best to act.

If his Cross weighs heavily on me, if I feel downcast, worried or fearful, the loving presence of my God will be so heartening!

At table, I will be mindful of his presence, that I may practise self-denial. In Church I will go very close to Him that he may graciously let me enter into sweet conversation with him.

On the road, I will have him close to me, that he may be my faithful Guardian and keep me away from all danger of sin. When I speak, I will think of him lest I should displease him.

And when I keep silent I will have Him in mind that I may be entirely his. In doing good to my neighbour I will keep him close to me so that I may do everything for pure love of him, with great kindness and with the greatest peace of mind. I will give up all earthly affection: may Jesus alone rule over my heart; may Jesus alone inspire, sustain and bring to completion all that I do, think or plan.

I will think of myself in the world solely to love Jesus, solely to serve Jesus. Acceptance of the holy will of God will therefore be my very-special virtue. If God wants me to be healthy, I will be glad of it, and if he wills that I be sick, I will be equally happy. If he wants me to be quiet and 'fortunate', I will thank him, and if he leaves me in poverty or neglect, I will do the same. If he wants me to remain in the world, I will stay in it willingly, and if he wants me to be a Religious, it is the same for me. If he lets me be loved, held in high esteem and surrounded with attention, I will be grateful to him, and I will realize that God wills to have it so in order to help me in my weakness; if he, instead, permits that I be hated, defamed or wronged, I will rejoice in his presence and I will admit that I deserve even worse for my sins. If he wants me to devote my energies in doing good to my neighbour and attend to the spiritual and material benefit of others, I will do it most heartily, and for his sake alone; if he would rather have me live in seclusion and solitude, I will avail myself of that time to attend to my own spiritual life and lead a life of prayer. Lord, I entrust myself to you. Grant that I may no longer offer resistance to your most holy voice. I am sure you expect something from me, I realize that you are not quite happy with my prayer-life. I am well-aware that to undertake what you want from me calls for great virtue and courage and, on the other hand, I know that I am extremely weak and helpless; I therefore feel unable to pay heed to your voice. And so I turn to you and appeal to your Charity. I abandon myself entirely in your arms. Do with me as you will, for I desire nothing so much as that.

Blessed Virgin Mary, I earnestly recommend myself to you. Help me do what God wants from me.

Dear St. Aloysius, redouble in me your spirit of prayer, so that I may meet with God's approval and pleasure; pray for me always.

Hail Jesus and Mary.

VOCAL PRAYERS

THAT I RECITE EVERY DAY

The entire Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary

The Psalms of the Most Holy Name of Jesus. Monday, Wednesday, Friday.

The 5 Psalms of the Most Holy Name of Mary. Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday.

Some *Pater* etc. to various Saints, 12 in all.

Some *Hail Marys* for various persons, 33 in all.

Some prayers to Jesus and to Mary and to various Saints, 8 in all.

Way of the Cross 3 times a week: Sunday, Thursday, Saturday.

The 7 Penitential Psalms twice a week: Sunday, Thursday. Beads of the Sacred Heart and of Our Lady of Sorrows, on Friday.

Holy Rosary and prayers of the Christian, every day.

INTENTIONS

THAT YOU WILL FIX IN THE RECITATION OF YOUR OFFICE

In saying:

- Matins - You will think of Jesus Christ's humility in washing the feet of the Apostles
- Lauds - You will think of Jesus Christ's love in instituting the Most Holy Sacrament
- Prime - You will think of the Agony of Jesus in the Garden
- Terce - Of His Scourging
- Sexte - Of His Crowning with Thorns
- Nones - Of His Way to Calvary
- Vespers - Of His most painful Crucifixion
- Compline - Of His Burial

