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## PART II.

### PRACTICES OF A LIFE OF PERFECTION

#### II.

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## II.

### PRACTICES FOR FIXED TIMES

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HAIL JESUS, MARY AND ST ALOYSIUS

### FOR CARNIVAL TIME

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Help me, dear Jesus, to do some little thing you will be pleased with and serve as a little comfort to your Heart, so greatly wronged by so many sins during these days. I therefore resolve ...

1. To renew three times a day my vow of greater perfection and to observe it with greater care than usual.

2. To apply the *discipline* 4 times a week: Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday for the length of a *Miserere*, for the conversion of sinners.

3. Unfailingly to get up during the night to pay the usual visit, adding 3 *Pater* to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, recommending to him sinners who are up in the night to offend him.

4. For three hours every day I will keep two pebbles under my feet, joining my little inconvenience to the three

hours of agony of Jesus, and then offering it to God the Father in expiation of my sins and those of others.

5. I will make 7 mortifications every day, in memory of the 7 Sorrows of Mary, imploring her, by the merits of her Sorrows, to have special care of the youth and not let them go astray at any time, but especially during this time.

6. I will overcome my laziness in writing, not letting any day pass by without writing something; to stimulate my will in this, I will join the trouble I take in it to the immense hardship that Jesus bore in his public ministry, and I will offer it to him for the souls in purgatory.

7. Three times a day I will ask St Aloysius to recommend our Institute to the merciful Heart of Jesus; I will beg him to remove every obstacle and to see to it that it may start soon. Jesus, Mary and Aloysius, help me.

## LITTLE PRACTICES

### FOR THE OBSERVANCE OF HOLY LENT

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1. I intend to unite myself in spirit with all those who during this time are practising the strictest penance and observing fasting with rigour; with all these I too offer the little I can do, and I will offer it to you, my God, as a penance for my own sins and for those of the whole world.

2. In place of fasting, I beg you, my God, to be pleased with the act of obedience that I make in refraining from it; I would do it gladly, and I pray you to let my Superior know if I am truly justified in not fasting, because I want to abide with peace of mind by his advice.

3. If I cannot do much, I will do little; however, I promise that I will most faithfully carry out all the particular things that I am fixing for myself, according to what I shall be allowed in obedience.

4. I will sleep half-an-hour less, that is, 6½ hours. As soon as I wake up in the night, I will get up from bed and pay a short visit and pray for the conversion of sinners. I will spend as much extra time as I can in holy Meditation.

5. I will always give up a fourth part of my breakfast, (and put no sugar in my Coffee)<sup>1</sup>, or put very little if someone is watching me. At lunch I will always make three mortifications, and I will help myself to only one dish. At supper I will take only soup, and some bread, if at all. In between meals I will never take anything except for health reasons, and give it always to the Lord in the person of his poor people. I will (never)<sup>2</sup> eat fruit. However, if my Parents tell me to do something different, I will do as they wish.

6. Every day I will apply the discipline for the length of a (quarter-of-an-hour)<sup>3</sup>. Every day, for two hours, I will keep pebbles under my feet, and during this time I will reflect on the Passion of Jesus Christ.

7. On Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays I will impose rigorous 'fasting' on my eyes. I will not look at useless things, I will not lift them from the ground in the street, at home I will observe only things connected with my duties, and on these fixed days I will refrain from looking even at the dearest things, like Heaven, the Crucifix, Our Lady and St Aloysius, or at least not more than twice a day.

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<sup>1</sup> The words here put in brackets are in Bartolomea's paper cancelled by her Confessor by two horizontal lines.

<sup>2</sup> Cancelled and replaced by: on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

<sup>3</sup> Cancelled and replaced by: the time of saying the *Miserere*.

8. On Mondays and Wednesdays I will impose rigorous 'fasting' on my tongue. I will not say any word that is not strictly necessary. (On these same days I will offer the Lord the sweetest recreation that I have, that is, that of holding conversation with my dear friend Caterina G.<sup>1</sup> avoiding the chance to meet her)<sup>2</sup>.

9. On Fridays and Saturdays I will impose 'fasting' on the faculties of my soul, by doing my best, as far as possible, to use them only in spiritual things.

10. I will use all means to go against my will; I will depend for everything, even the smallest things, strictly obeying even those younger to me. I will look out for every opportunity to practise Holy Humility, and three times a day I will beg Our Lord, on my knees, with arms outstretched, to grant it to me for charity's sake and by the merits of his Sacred Wounds.

11. Every morning I will pray the Lord with all my heart to give me on that day some suffering to endure: be it sickness, opposition, humiliation, correction, temporal disgrace, etc. I will hold everything precious and each time I will recite the *Agimus tibi gratias* (I give you thanks). If in the evening I find that I had had no suffering on that day, I will recite in a real spirit of

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<sup>1</sup> Caterina Gerosa, Bartolomea's companion in the foundation of the Institute of the Sisters of Charity.

<sup>2</sup> Words cancelled.

humility the *Miserere* with my hands under my knees, and I will pray the Lord not to let the same thing happen next day.

Praise to my dear Jesus.

Love to my sweet Mummy Mary.

Honour to my beloved Aloysius.

Amen.



I BEG YOUR REVERENCE TO GRANT ME, TILL EASTER, YOUR PERMISSION TO DO THE FOLLOWING:

To take the discipline every day.

To wear the penance chain on Wednesdays and Fridays.

To wear the penance bracelets on Mondays and Saturdays for 4 hours.

To fast on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays.

To give up coffee every day except on fasting days.

To give up fruit altogether.

To keep two pebbles under my feet on Fridays.

Every night before disposing myself to sleep, to get up from bed and make a short visit to Jesus Crucified for the sake of sinners.

Not to repair myself from the cold on Saturdays.

With my tongue to trace on the floor the name of Jesus on Sundays and Fridays, and the name of Mary on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

To make a visit-in-spirit to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament: No. times and to Mary: No. times<sup>1</sup>

Together with the freedom to continue to do more of them for the salvation of sinners according to circumstances.

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<sup>1</sup> Here and for the next Novena vowels “a, e, i, o, u” written by her stand for “1, 2, 3, 4, 5”.

## FOR THE NOVENA OF OUR LADY OF MT. CARMEL

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Take the discipline every day, two *Hail Holy Queen* longer than usual.

Wear the penance chain on 3 days, that is: the two Saturdays and Wednesday.

Fast on two days: Friday and Wednesday.

Sleep five hours.

Pay a short visit to Mary during the night.

On two nights sleep on the floor.

Drink no wine nor Coffee, except on days of fasting.

Leave the table always still a bit hungry.

Put two pebbles in the shoes on Monday and Thursday.

Keep eyes cast down, and never leaning on any support during prayer.

Seek no protection against unpleasant climatic conditions. Don't eat nor drink in between meals.

I implore Your Reverence to be more liberal than usual in your permissions, as this is for me the greatest Solemnity of all.

I am still waiting to have back my Method of Life.

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## **PRACTICES**

### **FOR THE HOLY SEASON OF ADVENT**

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1. In this time (of Advent), for the sake of Baby Jesus, I will strive to become lowly, by obeying everyone gladly, in every detail, and with much simplicity. I will carry out every task assigned to me, down to the tiniest ones, for obedience' sake, by seeking permission, advice or the best way of doing them.

2. I will look out for every opportunity to practise charity towards my neighbour. The poor, the illiterate, the youth, sinners, souls in purgatory, the sick, will be the persons I will be most concerned to help in every way. For them I will spare myself no trouble, words, prayers, mortifications, etc.; in fact, the little good that I do during this time will be entirely offered for them.

3. I will prepare the Holy Crib of Baby Jesus in my own heart. I will gather in it the senses of my body and the powers of my soul so that they may stay with the Heavenly Babe and keep him company. In all the 33 visits-in-spirit to the Blessed Sacrament, I will always turn also to Baby Jesus, and with a

loving glance I will express to him the affection of my heart and my love for Him.

4. I will stay in the sweet presence of Baby Jesus as assiduously as if I had bound myself to it with a special vow. I will ceaselessly pray that he may not let me be unmindful of Him, even for a moment.

5. I will set out for the stable of Bethlehem. Each day I will cover a mile by making some generous act out of love for Baby Jesus, especially by practising holy humility. Every evening I will put a mark to show if I have made any progress through an act of that kind, and I will commit myself to press on so eagerly that I may be the first one to enter the stable and receive the most exquisite graces from Baby Jesus.

6. I will not indulge in any bodily pleasure. (I will give up fruit and snacks, In the evening I will take only soup)<sup>1</sup>. I will warm up only hands and feet just a little, and only poorly even in bed, I will take the discipline (every day)<sup>2</sup>. I will sleep for (six)<sup>3</sup> hours only, devoting the time taken from sleep to prayer or in works of charity.

Every night I will get out from bed and pay a short visit, (not

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<sup>1</sup> Words in brackets are cancelled by her Confessor, and 'No' written on top of them.

<sup>2</sup> Words in brackets are cancelled and *three times a week* is written instead.

<sup>3</sup> Corrected; *seven* is written instead.

longer than 3 or 4 minutes)<sup>1</sup> to Baby Jesus, and I will tell no-one about the ill-health that the Lord may give me during this time, nor the crosses (provided there is no reason to think that they need to be treated and cured)<sup>2</sup>.

7. Three times a day I will congratulate Mary on her good 'fortune' of becoming Mother of God; I will beg Her to reserve a seat close to Her in the stable, and prepare my heart Herself for the coming of Baby Jesus; I will ask her to teach me holy humility, let me know God's will and give me the grace to carry it out in what I feel inspired to.

Hail to Baby Jesus and His most Holy Mother.

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<sup>1</sup> Words in brackets are added by her Confessor.

<sup>2</sup> Words in brackets are added by her Confessor.

† JESUS ET MARIA †

## FOR THE HOLY SEASON OF ADVENT

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Sweet Child Jesus, I have come at a sluggish pace, waiting till the very eve to meet you, and even now, unless you drive me on with a strong push, I would still be feeling dry and cold. A thousand thanks to you, dear Jesus, but for love's sake keep at your work. Unless you help me, instead of offering you what you expect from me, I would only offend you, displease you and do terrible things besides. I pray you, then: if you expect anything from me, go on with it yourself, and do also what I should be doing, making up for my helplessness.

And so, during this holy season, I will build a lovely Crib for my dear Child in my own heart. First of all, I will focus my eyes on it by resolving never to use them out of curiosity or thoughtlessly, but fix them all the more on the loveable face of the heavenly Child and in it take full delight. All the glances, even where there is no wrong, which I deny to my eyes, I intend to cast most lovingly on the beloved Child. Inside the Crib of my heart I will confine my tongue, and during this season I will speak only when it is strictly necessary or for reasons of charity. All the words that I 'rob' my tongue of, I will address to the Heavenly Babe, so that He too may graciously let me hear his voice, and his will, in my own heart.

I will hold my ears prisoners in the Crib of my heart, by depriving myself of the pleasure of hearing talk of indifferent or useless things. There too I will station my whole body, so that everything may be at the service of the Heavenly Babe, and I will do this by abandoning it totally in the arms of Divine Providence. I will not talk about physical indisposition unless I am asked to, nor will I fully satisfy my body in food, drink and clothing; I will pay no heed to its demands for delicate attentions; I will appoint it a servant to the Heavenly Child, and so its only concern should be that of pleasing Him alone.

Outside the Crib I will leave all other creatures: my self-love, desire for appreciation, worldly pastimes or anything earthy. Instead, I will let in the girls of my school, just like little lambs that the Lord wishes me to bring up beautifully adorned for Him.

And so I will redouble all my watchfulness, concern, care and trouble towards these lambs of Baby Jesus, driven on by the happy motivation of pleasing the king, the owner of my Crib.

With the same aim I will let into the Crib the Hospital (*patients*), the poor, the sick, sinners, Souls in Purgatory, our Oratorio, all the girls; I will think of all these for the sake of Jesus alone; I will work hard for them, but with Jesus and for His sake; for their good I will act, but only in the way that is pleasing to Jesus.

The loveable Child lies in the Crib of my heart: poor, abandoned, icy cold, deprived of company and even of bare necessities. I will do my best to provide him with all these by

practising all the virtues. Close to the Heavenly Babe I will put Humility in the role of a Mummy. In my love for this dear Child, I will make sure that this Mummy Humility will serve him, comfort him and help him. Hence I will strive to have a most lowly idea of myself, to have esteem for others, to keep silent when others praise me, to seek humiliation, to deny myself in everything, to be sincerely glad if others are preferred to me, if I am humbled, corrected or even insulted, and never to shun opportunities for humbling my pride.

As first Ladies-in-waiting at the service of the Heavenly Babe I will post Patience and Sweetness. Therefore, during this holy season, I will avoid getting impatient and hold back even the slightest harsh word, nor will I not get upset by the indiscretion of others, perhaps, not get annoyed at the insistent demands of the little girls, and in correcting them I will be always very kind and gentle.

I will attend to the needs of the Heavenly Babe by a genuine, or I should say, an extraordinary charity. Every morning I will renew my vow of charity in my Holy Communion, and I will use every care to practise it with everyone, imagining that I am attending to the Holy Child himself.

As a doorkeeper of the Crib I will post Fervour and Inner Recollection. I will frequently ask the Heavenly Child to grant me these two virtues for charity's sake, and on my part I will co-operate by doing everything willingly, gladly, thoroughly well: I will remain in the presence of God as much as I can,



and to make it easy for myself, I will take the dear Child with me wherever I go: at home, along the streets, in Church, in class, at table, in bed; I will think of Him alone, doing my best to please Him, to entertain him, to love him tenderly.

Three times a day I will renew my vow of Greater Perfection. I will always keep in mind that I am sweetly bound to Jesus, that I am not free to seek after my own pleasure in anything, that I should always seek to be humble, self-denying, going against my own wishes and working tirelessly for others, in a word, live a crucified life. Every morning, in my Holy Communion, I will offer my whole self as a victim for his glory. I therefore resolve to bear peacefully any adversity, any affliction, any cross, because I should not desire anything except what Jesus wants; I should not love anything except what He loves; I don't want to do anything except what He wants.

Very frequently, even in the midst of my work, I will withdraw inside the Crib to be with Jesus; every night without fail I will pay my usual visit, during which I will pray very hard that ...

Lastly, dear Jesus: I will be unable to do anything, or rather, I will only offend you even more unless you help me. I earnestly commend myself to your infinite charity; I do have trust that you will hear me. Grant that I may say: *I will for ever sing of the mercies of the Lord*<sup>1</sup>. Dear Mary, give me your heart; I ask it of you in order to love your Jesus, my Jesus, with it. Beloved St Aloysius, pray, pray, always pray for me. Amen.

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<sup>1</sup> Original in Latin "*Misericordias Domini in aeternum cantabo*".

**DEVOUT TRIDUUM**, WITH THE INTENTION OF CALLING ON THE HOLY SPIRIT, THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, MY BELOVED ST ALOYSIUS AND THE SAINTLY DEPARTED SISTER ROSA<sup>1</sup>, THAT THEY MAY OBTAIN FOR ME THE GRACE OF KNOWING AND FULFILLING THE WILL OF GOD REGARDING MY VOCATION

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1. Three times a day I shall recite the *Veni Creator* with arms outstretched, to be granted light in that regard.

2. Every day I shall pay a visit to the altar of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel that I may have her support in carrying out with clear knowledge God's will regarding my vocation.

3. I shall pay another visit to the altar of St Aloysius, begging him to act as my advocate for success in this thing. I shall also recite 3 *De Profundis* for the Departed sister, that she may obtain the grace for me.

4. Every day I shall apply the discipline for the time I take in reciting a *Veni Creator*, a *Hail Holy Queen* and a *De Profundis*.

5. As soon as I wake up, I shall get up once more from bed and visit Jesus Crucified and recite 5 *Pater*, *Ave* and *Gloria* with my hands under my knees, earnestly commending my vocation to his charity.

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<sup>1</sup> Sr Rosa Vignoli, clarist - see foot *Note* pg. 743.

6. I shall split the day in four parts. From 5 to 10 will be dedicated to the Holy Spirit and all I do during that time I mean to offer it in His honour and to secure His support. From 10 to 3 will be offered to Mary: I shall unite my actions to her infinite merits and beg Her to act as a Mother to me. From 3 to 7 will be presented to St Aloysius, with the aim of honouring him with my poor work so that he too may be my faithful advocate before God.

From 7 to 11 will be offered to the above-mentioned departed sister, I shall recite prayers for her soul (though she does not need them), so that she too may obtain for me the grace I desire<sup>1</sup>.

7. All that I do the three coming days: holy Communion, prayers, visits, mortifications etc. will be done with the same aim of asking God for the grace of knowing and doing his most Holy Will regarding my vocation.

Lastly, I will like a beggar ask others to offer on my behalf prayers, holy Communion, etc. because the grace is too great, and cannot be obtained except by prayer.

Furthermore, I ask your Reverence to grant me, for charity's sake, the merit of Obedience in the little that I do, and your holy Blessing.

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<sup>1</sup> Regarding the hours see foot *Note* pg 625.

## (PENANCE PRACTICES FOR THE FOLLOWING NOVENAS)

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### NOVENA OF THE NATIVITY OF MARY

The Discipline every day and the penance Chain on three days; Fasting on two days; every night a visit when I wake up, and the night of the eve of the feast I shall sleep on the floor, and two more nights I will put in the bed wooden boards or stones; on two days the penance Bracelets, and eat no fruit. Every day I shall do Mortifications, No. ...

Acts of homage to the heavenly Child Mary, No. ...

Prayers to be reborn in my heart, No. ...

### NOVENA OF THE GUARDIAN ANGELS

Recite every day 9 *Angele Dei* (prayer to the Guardian Angel) with my hands under my knees. The Discipline on 3 days, Fasting on the eve, penance Chain on one day, stones in my shoes on two days. No. ... acts of thanksgiving for the Guardian Angel's care of me; No. ... prayers to ask him to keep me in his care.

### NOVENA OF ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI

Eat no fruit, the Discipline on two days, the penance Chain for 4 hours on one day. Fasting on the eve. Drink no wine on 3 days, give up coffee on two days.

Acts of prayer to obtain for me his spirit of humility and penitence No. ... Visits to his holy picture, No. ...

#### NOVENA OF ST THERESA

Recite *Glory* be 9 times in her honour with hands under the knees. Give up fruit on 3 days, and coffee on 2 days; no breakfast on one day. I shall fast on the eve, apply the Discipline on 2 days and wear the Chain on one day; I shall sleep half-an-hour less to devote it to prayer. No. ... times I shall do acts of supplication to obtain for me her love for God and her spirit of prayer.

#### NOVENA OF ALL SAINTS

Recite the Litany of All Saints with hands crossed. Eat no fruit; apply the Discipline on 4 days and wear the penance Chain on two days and the penance Bracelets during Holy Communion. Fast on two days, pay them a visit every night on waking up, do No. ... acts of mortification, and No. ... acts of charity.

#### NOVENA OF THE PRESENTATION OF THE BLESSED V. MARY

Apply the Discipline every day; the penance Chain twice: the usual night visit; pebbles in the shoes for 3 days; abstain from fruit; wear Bracelets three times; every day trace on the floor, with the tongue, the name of Mary. Fast twice and once drop the breakfast. Give up coffee twice; no wine on two days.

## NOVENA OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF MARY

The Discipline every day, the penance Chain on two days, fast on the eve, the usual night visit, keep silent, speak only when needed: prepare for holy Communion, and do thanksgiving after it, on my knees. Take no fruit, keep eyes down. Use no blanket at night.

## CHRISTMAS NOVENA

Fasting every day except on Sunday. Use no blanket at night. Sleep an hour less than usual. Apply the discipline every day, wear the penance Chain during holy Communion every day and wear it whole day on Christmas Eve till midnight. Every night pay a visit to Baby Jesus. Give up fruit and wine; speak only when strictly needed, keep eyes down, keep pebbles in the shoes on 3 days. On two nights sleep on the floor, and stay awake the night of Christmas Eve. On two nights put some thorns in the bed. Every day trace on the floor, with the tongue, the name of Jesus and five crosses. Always kneel on the ground for prayer. With my thoughts I shall 'go' to the Stable of Jesus No. ...times. Congratulate Mary No. ...times. Thank the Eternal Father No. ... times.

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