

# Live Jesus!



St. Francis de Sales is the patron saint of Catholic journalists and of the deaf.

His letters to lay persons and his books, especially *The Introduction to the Devout Life*, St. Francis de Sales helped to shape the Church's articulation of the universal call to holiness, to be saints.

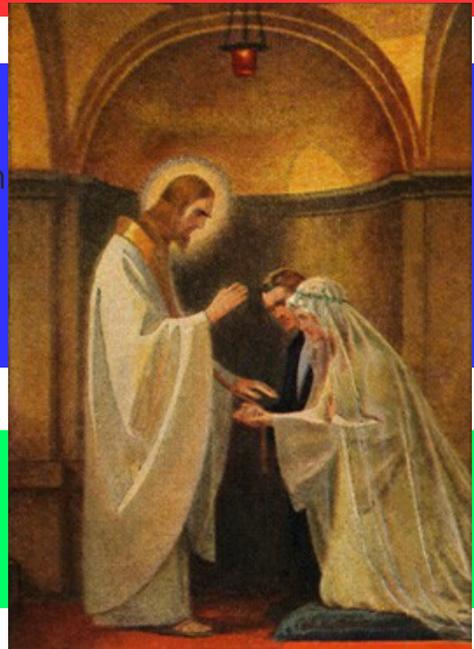
Deeply rooted in the heart of Francis was a sense of Christian Humanism. God has entered into the world. To be human is no longer “foreign” to God. In the Incarnation Jesus took into Himself all what it means to be human. For the Christian, he need not try to suppress, destroy, or marginalize his humanity. Instead, he clings even more tightly to Christ, enters more deeply into His mind and heart.

***The Christian Lives Jesus.***

1.) All people are called to holiness, not just a select few. It is a **"heresy"** to banish the devout life from any career or lifestyle.

2.) Since all people are called to holiness, then the means to achieve that holiness must be readily available. One lives the "devout life" by loving God in and through **his or her state in life**. True devotion is more about how much we love we do our duties with, than what are duties are. We are called to do the ordinary "passionately well."

3.) The devout life is relational. One is devout in so far as they relate to one another... with the Heart of Jesus! The devout person **puts on the mind and affections of Jesus in his/her relations**.



4.) All life is to be done through love and nothing through force. Love in this case is an act of the will, not a feeling. It is seeing good in another and choosing and acting to make that goodness grow. We should more accentuate the positive rather than condemn the negative. **We should assume a positive stance towards everyone.** "The measure of our love is to love without measure."



5.) **Humility**—living in self-truthfulness about who we are, both positive and negative, and about who God is towards us ---is most important to true holiness. "Come and learn from me for I am gentle and humble of heart." The devout person is unpretentious, natural and approachable.

6.) Humility leads us to **gentleness** towards our neighbour. Because one is so aware of his/her own needs and weaknesses, one extends to another person similar understanding and compassion. Gentleness is not weakness, but rather controlled, directed and loving strength. It might also be described as knowing how to react to life appropriately and proportionately. To quote DeSales: **"There is nothing so strong as gentleness and nothing so gentle as real strength."**



7.) **Civility and respect** must mark the behaviour of a truly "gentle," devout Christian.

8.) The **here and now** is where a Christian lives life. The past is over. The future is yet to be. "**Now** is the time of salvation."

9.) Because we have a Saviour, we are always **optimistic**. We already know how things are going to end. Sin, death and the things which deny life will not triumph.

10.) A truly devout life enhances, not detracts from, ones life. Real devotion **never inconveniences** others.

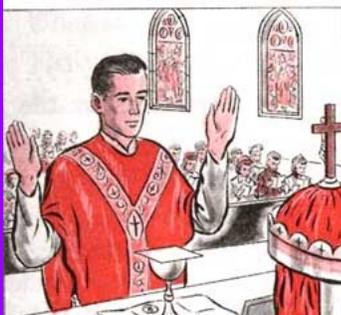
11.) The devout life is a **process**. It only happens with grace, perseverance and patience over a lifetime. One is always **striving** to be devout.



12.) The Christian life is primarily a matter of the **conversion of the heart**. It is something silent, interior, ever aware and learning from life's lessons.

13.) We are called to be patient with everyone, **especially ourselves**.

**WHAT WE SEE**



**WHAT WE SHOULD THINK OF**



14.) We are called to a "liberty of spirit"—something which includes obedience but which excludes constraint, scruples and anxiety. **Frequent reception of the Sacraments** is a great means to progress by Christian liberty.

From the *Introduction to the Devout Life* by St Francis de Sales

*Devotion must be practiced in different ways*

In the creation God commanded the plants to bring forth their fruits, each one after its kind. So does He command all Christians, who are the living plants of His Church, to bring forth the fruits of devotion, **each according to his character and vocation.**

**Devotion must be exercised in different** ways by the gentleman, the workman, the servant, the prince, the widow, the maid, and the married woman. Not only this, but the practice of devotion must be also adapted to the strength, the employment, and the duties of each one in particular.

I ask you, Philothea, is it fit that a bishop should lead the solitary life of a Carthusian? **Or that married people should lay up no greater store of goods than the Franciscan?** If a tradesman were to remain the whole day in church, like a member of a religious order, or were a religious continually exposed to encounter difficulties in the service of his neighbor as a bishop is, would not such devotion be ridiculous, unorganized, and insupportable? **Nevertheless, this fault is very common.**

No, Philothea, true devotion does no harm whatever, but rather gives perfection to all things. But when it goes contrary to our lawful vocation, then without doubt it is false.

The bee extracts honey from flowers without injuring them, and leaves them as whole and fresh as she found them. **True devotion does still better. It not only does no injury to any vocation or employment, but on the contrary it adorns and beautifies it.** So also every vocation becomes more agreeable when united with devotion. The care of the family is rendered more peaceable, the love of the husband and wife more sincere, the service of the prince more faithful, and every type of employment more pleasant and agreeable.

**It is an error, or rather a heresy, to try to banish the devout life from the regiment of soldiers, the shop of the mechanic, the court of princes, or the home of married folk.** It is true, Philothea, that a purely contemplative, monastic, and religious devotion cannot be exercised in such ways of life. But besides these three kinds of devotion, there are several others adapted to bring to perfection those who live in the secular state.

Wheresoever we are, we can and should aspire to a perfect life. **Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind,** that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. And be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and put on the new nature, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

