

A SHORT RULE

FOR SECULAR CONTEMPLATIVES

This short rule can be found in *The Foundations for a contemplative secular life*, a simple summary of the basics, to be borne in mind by anyone who wants to become a true contemplative in the world. Each point is accompanied by biblical quotes which can serve as an aid to prayer and meditation.

- 1.** If you are looking for perfect union with God to make your life an effective instrument of salvation, you should follow the advice given here. Let the Holy Spirit shed light on the path that leads you to fully identify yourself with Christ crucified for the glory of the Father and the salvation of the world^{[1](#)}.
- 2.** In order to know if your vocation is authentic, examine whether you have an absolute desire for God and whether you seek him in truth and with all your strength^{[2](#)}.
- 3.** If God calls you into intimacy and wants you to possess him completely, don't let the opportunity pass you by. Don't dither or delay in your response: say «yes» to Him, not in word, but with the faithful surrender of your life. Get going, without making excuses or making things complicated. Following the Lord is simple and easy if you rely on his grace. Do not be deceived by this fleeting world^{[3](#)}.
- 4.** If you experience God's fire, do not let it go out; let your life be consumed and guided by the breath of the Spirit in your soul^{[4](#)}.
- 5.** Devote your whole life to seeking God in earnest^{[5](#)}.

- 6.** Do not be content with anything less than holiness, for you have been created to be holy6.
- 7.** If God lives in you and you in him you will be able to achieve the impossible7.
- 8.** Humbly ask God for the grace to keep yourself at all times completely united to him8.
- 9.** Try to live always in total awareness of the presence of God. May it be your sustenance and joy9.
- 10.** In the depths of your soul, where God dwells, build an interior cell which will be your permanent dwelling place10.
- 11.** Learn from Mary to open yourself to the Holy Spirit, to embrace the Word and to fulfil the Father's will in everything11.
- 12.** Ask for the grace of contemplation and strive to be faithful to your vocation in everything12.
- 13.** Your vocation is not an add-on but in fact constitutes your identity. Be aware that you are consecrated by God to carry out the mission he is entrusting to you13.
- 14.** Live in constant awareness of the indwelling Trinity and reject anything that has the power to distract you from the foundation of your life14.
- 15.** Try to forget yourself so that Jesus Christ may be your undisputed Lord and the centre of your entire existence. Renounce any idol that threatens to overshadow God15.
- 16.** Seek to be fully identified with Christ, especially in his incarnation, agony, passion and death16.
- 17.** Seek out the «place» within, where God dwells. You have no other duty in life than to make this journey in silence, with perseverance and without haste17.
- 18.** Always keep an inner silence, which consists in listening to God always and in everything18.

- 19.** Let Nazareth be your school of prayer and your dwelling place for contemplative living in the maelstrom of the world19.
- 20.** Learn through silence to discern God's voice from amongst the voices and sounds that reach you20.
- 21.** Accept that God is transforming you, even if it leads you to be at odds with the world. Do not compare yourself with others, but with God's will for you21.
- 22.** Defend your inner silence by stilling the hustle and bustle of your life22.
- 23.** Discover the desert in your heart and in everything around you, and learn to live there in order to find yourself and to meet with God23.
- 24.** Seek peace in all things. Adjust your breath, your step and the beat of your heart to the Lord's living presence in your life24.
- 25.** Live your life in its depths, not superficially; because only God, who dwells in the centre of your soul, can reveal the full richness of your life to you25.
- 26.** Don't strike out alone. You belong to the Church and only there will you find Christ26.
- 27.** Never lose sight of the fact that you're a «stranger residing in a foreign land». Remember at all times that you are merely passing through this world and don't stop rejoicing in the fact that heaven, which is your true homeland, is already in your soul27.
- 28.** Live the present moment as if your whole life were focused on each instant, because each moment is already part of eternity28.
- 29.** Don't be complacent. The contemplative has to begin the ascent to union with God anew each and every day29.
- 30.** Start each day by placing yourself in God's presence with an act of adoration. Proclaim your love to him and wholeheartedly

offer him all that you are and have as a humble expression of your love[30](#).

31. Stop frequently, even if it's just for an instant, before or during a task so as to be attentive to the Lord's presence and adore him at all times[31](#).

32. Make the Mass the central point of your day by preparing for it and putting the very best of yourself into it[32](#).

33. After receiving Communion and participating in the Mass, take special care to be recollected so that the grace you have received may be fruitful[33](#).

34. Make the most of the silence of the night to enjoy a special intimacy with the Lord. Be a sentinel keeping watch for the joyful hope of Christ's definitive and eternal dawn[34](#).

35. Don't lose your inner peace. Don't fret and don't let things agitate you. Put some order into your life and do everything calmly, even the most mundane, everyday things. Only then will the source of eternal silence open up within you[35](#).

36. Do not go to sleep without an act of adoration whilst placing the day which is ending in God's hands. Prepare for sleep in such a way that the climate of prayer is not broken, as in the words of the Song: «I was sleeping, but my heart was awake»[36](#).

37. Read and meditate the Word of God. May it nourish your inner life and be the light illuminating your journey[37](#).

38. Join in with the prayer of the Church whenever possible. Add your voice to that of the Son in order to praise and glorify the Father through the Liturgy of the Hours[38](#).

39. Nourish your spirit with *lectio divina* and spiritual reading[39](#).

40. Don't waste your time rushing about and worrying unnecessarily. You will not achieve anymore by rushing around, rather you will lose the peace you already have. You need to be responsible about your duties but you should not worry about

anything that is not God. Do what you need to do peacefully in the presence of God without wasting time. Remember that the Lord yearns neither for your work, nor your success, nor your wealth; it is you for whom God yearns^{[40](#)}.

41. Always try to find time for God and do not be in a hurry to end your time of prayer^{[41](#)}.

42. Avoid disorder and dispersion but don't impose a rigid structure on yourself that is incompatible with life as a secular and which could end up overwhelming you^{[42](#)}.

43. Deepen your experience of loving communion with God rather than broadening your knowledge even of the most holy matters^{[43](#)}.

44. Don't let yourself be distracted by longing for the past or with concerns for the future; you have to live in eternity here and now which means nothing less than clinging lovingly to God. Such union is already within your reach^{[44](#)}.

45. Do everything with simplicity and try to simplify everything, by avoiding everything that is of no concern to you. Your primary duty is the work of God^{[45](#)}.

46. It is only by forgetting yourself that you will be able to discover God's luminous gaze upon you^{[46](#)}.

47. Try to see God's provident hand in everything that happens for «we know that all things work for good for those who love God»^{[47](#)}.

48. You live in a world which is both hectic and chaotic. Ponder on the things which are worthless and ephemeral. Don't be caught in their clutches. Do not abandon your interior cell or risk losing your inner peace^{[48](#)}.

49. Place all your trust in God at all times. Abandon yourself to him and place your concerns and anxieties in his hands^{[49](#)}.

50. Forget yourself to the point where the limitations of the world and your neighbour no longer trouble you^{[50](#)}.

- 51.** Don't feel sorry for yourself and rejoice in being able to share in the redeeming cross of Christ [51](#).
- 52.** Give yourself generously to the work and suffering which following the Lord and being his witness in the world entail. Trust that the grace of God is sufficient for you and make the cross an offering of love to the Father [52](#).
- 53.** Do not flee from the cross, embrace it to the point where you can say: «I have been crucified with Christ; yet I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me» [53](#).
- 54.** Don't let hardships scare you. Rejoice in the knowledge that the loftiest summits demand a harsh climb. Contemplate Christ in his passion and you will discover that there is greatness in his humiliation and glory in his submission. Draw encouragement from him to follow in his footsteps and ask him for the grace not to yield to the temptation of slackening [54](#).
- 55.** You will find obstacles and unexpected hindrances on the path, accept them and don't let the enemy use them to make off with your inner peace. Make of your interior silence an impregnable castle, always keeping hold of your inner peace [55](#).
- 56.** Offer God every difficulty and make of them an act of love [56](#).
- 57.** Be aware that the enemy is waiting for you with a host of temptations cloaked in dispersion, haste, urgent or necessary tasks. Recollection will be your defence and inner peace your triumph [57](#).
- 58.** In times of darkness and temptations you must remain faithful to God's will, at any cost. Place all your trust in God and keep the flame of your faith alive. Seize the cross that Christ offers you because this is the way to show him true love, which does not consist in elevated feelings but in identifying yourself with the stripping of the Crucified One you love [58](#).

- 59.** Don't give up the fight for the spiritual battle is your path to purification, the means to become stronger and the opportunity to be truly faithful[59](#).
- 60.** Be always loving but do not ever give up your freedom. Let no other love ensnare you and separate you from God's path[60](#).
- 61.** Don't let yourself be ensnared by anything, because you are a pilgrim passing through this world[61](#).
- 62.** Do not yearn for any other place or any other circumstances by which to sanctify yourself. Do not eschew the cross. Divine providence always puts you in the ideal place for your sanctification and only in that place is the grace you need guaranteed[62](#).
- 63.** Accept martyrdom. In a materialistic world you cannot bear witness to God without giving your life. Opposition from the world and your environment will allow you to confess Christ by the unquestionable power of your life providing solid foundations for the construction of God's kingdom[63](#).
- 64.** No vocation or mission in the Church should violate your contemplative life. You must integrate everything you are and do within it[64](#).
- 65.** Always act as the bearer of God that you are. On many occasions he will only have you to make himself present in the place where you are[65](#).
- 66.** You should find delight not in talking about God but in seeking him with all your heart[66](#).
- 67.** The fruitfulness of your life does not depend on you doing more but on you remaining in Christ just as the branch remains on the vine and that, like him, you are able to live the fruitfulness of the grain of wheat which falls to the ground and dies to produce much fruit[67](#).

68. Only if you are loving and allow yourself to be loved, can you become totally transparent in order to be 'light' But rather than trying to enlighten, try to dwell in the light within [68](#).

69. Be a person of few words, thus you will defend your inner silence and recollection. The one who is always listening to God is more attentive to the life within rather than exterior life [69](#).

70. Defend your vocation, your mission, your faith and your principles in humility and truthfully, but listen to others and don't harass them [70](#).

71. Don't offer words about God. Since you are God's bearer give him to the others [71](#).

72. If you are able to choose, discreetly choose the poorest and humblest option. Not even the most holy end can be justified by resources of great value [72](#).

73. Don't blow your own trumpet. Do your duty simply and with humility, without seeking gratitude or recognition from others [73](#).

74. Always try to be positive, kind and welcoming so that you are a witness to God's goodness [74](#).

75. Accept that you are and also appear to be poor and vulnerable. Do not seek strength anywhere except in the Crucified One [75](#).

76. Remember that no matter what happens, it is always possible to be loving, to suffer, to offer everything to God and to smile. By doing this you will make this world your heaven, and heaven will be your homeland [76](#).

NOTES

[1](#) «So be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect» (Mt 5:48). «Be holy, for I, the Lord your God, am holy» (Lv 19:2). «Remain in me, as I

remain in you» (Jn 15:4). «May the eyes of [your] hearts be enlightened, that you may know what is the hope that belongs to his call, what are the riches of glory in his inheritance among the holy ones, and what is the surpassing greatness of his power for us who believe» (Eph 1:18-19).

2 «More than that, I even consider everything as a loss because of the supreme good of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have accepted the loss of all things and I consider them so much rubbish, that I may gain Christ...to know him and the power of his resurrection and [the] sharing of his sufferings by being conformed to his death» (Phil 3:8-10). «As the deer longs for streams of water, so my soul longs for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, the living God. When can I enter and see the face of God?» (Ps 42:2-3). «The Lord looks down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if even one is wise, if even one seeks God» (Ps 14:2). «O God, you are my God it is you I seek! For you my body yearns; for you my soul thirsts, In a land parched, lifeless, and without water» (Ps 63:2). «Yet when you seek the Lord, your God, from there, you shall indeed find him if you search after him with all your heart and soul» (Dt 4:29).

3 «Oh, that today you would hear his voice» (Ps 95:7-8). «We appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain... now is a very acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation» (2 Cor 6:1-2). «A man had two sons. He came to the first and said, 'Son, go out and work in the vineyard today.' He said in reply, 'I will not,' but afterwards he changed his mind and went. The man came to the other son and gave the same order. He said in reply, 'Yes, sir,' but did not go» (Mt 21:28-30). «Go forth from your land, your relatives, and from your father's house to a land that I will show you.... Abram went as the Lord directed him» (Gn 12:1-4). «If then you were raised with Christ, seek what is above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Think of what is above, not of what is on earth» (Col 3:1-2). «Those sown among thorns are another sort. They are the people who hear the word, but worldly anxiety, the lure of riches, and the craving for other things intrude and choke the word, and it bears no fruit» (Mk 4:18-19). «What profit would there be for one to gain the whole world and forfeit his life?» (Mt 16:26). «Wait for the Lord, take courage; be stouthearted, wait for the Lord!» (Ps 27:14). «Children, let us love not in word or speech but in deed and truth» (1 Jn 3:18).

4 «Zeal for your house will consume me» (Jn 2:17). «O God, you are my God it is you I seek! For you my body yearns; for you my soul thirsts, In a land parched, lifeless, and without water» (Ps 63:2). «Do not quench the Spirit» (1 Thes 5:19). «For our God is a consuming fire» (Heb 12:29).

5 Cf. n° 2. «When you look for me, you will find me. Yes, when you seek me with all your heart» (Jer 29:13). «Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near» (Is 55:6). «Seek out the Lord and his might; constantly seek his face» (Ps 105:4).

6 «As he chose us in him, before the foundation of the world, to be holy and without blemish before him in love» (Eph 1:4). «Be holy, for I, the Lord your God, am holy» (Lv 19:2). «But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people of his own, so that you may announce the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light» (1 Pt 2:9). «God chose you as the firstfruits for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in truth. To this end he has [also] called you through our gospel to possess the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ» (2 Thes 2:13-14).

7 «I say to you, whoever believes in me will do the works that I do, and will do greater ones than these, because I am going to the Father» (Jn 14:12). «Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit» (Jn 15:5). «If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask for whatever you want and it will be done for you» (Jn 15:7). «It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain» (Jn 15:16).

8 «I am the vine, you are the branches» (Jn 15:5). «As the Father loves me, so I also love you. Remain in my love» (Jn 15:9).

9 «My food is to do the will of the one who sent me and to finish his work» (Jn 4:34). «Remain in me, as I remain in you» (Jn 15:4). «I shall walk before the Lord» (Ps 116:9).

10 «Lord, you have probed me, you know me» (Ps 139:1). «Behind and before you encircle me and rest your hand upon me» (Ps 139:5). «Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him» (Jn 6:56).

11 «Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word» (Lk 1:38).

12 «That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation resulting in knowledge of him. May

the eyes of [your] hearts be enlightened, that you may know what is the hope that belongs to his call, what are the riches of glory in his inheritance among the holy ones» (Eph 1:17-18).

13 «For you are a people holy to the Lord, your God; the Lord, your God, has chosen you from all the peoples on the face of the earth to be a people specially his own» (Dt 7:6). «He has now reconciled in his fleshly body through his death, to present you holy, without blemish, and irreproachable before him» (Col 1:22).

14 Cf. nº 10. «On that day you will realize that I am in my Father and you are in me and I in you» (Jn 14:20). «I in them and you in me» (Jn 17:23).

15 «Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself» (Mt 16:24). «Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life» (Jn 12:25). «You cannot serve God and mammon» (Mt 16:24). «Seek first the kingdom [of God] and his righteousness, and all these things will be given you besides» (Mt 6:33). «I even consider everything as a loss because of the supreme good of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord» (Phil 3:8). «Yet I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me» (Gal 2:20). «Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is Lord alone! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength» (Mk 12:29-30).

16 «Have among yourselves the same attitude that is also yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave....» (Phil 2:5-7). «To know him and the power of his resurrection and [the] sharing of his sufferings by being conformed to his death, if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead» (Phil 3:10-11). «Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ» (1Cor 11:1). «Live in love, as Christ loved us and handed himself over for us as a sacrificial offering to God» (Eph 5:2). «My soul is sorrowful even to death. Remain here and keep watch with me» (Mt 26:38).

17 Cf. nº 10. «Lord, you have probed me, you know me» (Ps 139:1). «Behind and before you encircle me and rest your hand upon me» (Ps 139:5). «Do not worry about tomorrow; tomorrow will take care of itself» (Mt 6:34). «Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God» (Phil 4:6).

18 «Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, [then] I will enter his house and dine with him, and he with me» (Rev 3:20). «Oh, that today you would hear his voice» (Ps 95:7).

19 «He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them... And Jesus advanced [in] wisdom and age and favor before God and man» (Lk 2:51-52).

20 «Test everything; retain what is good» (1 Thes 5:21). «The word of God is living and effective, sharper than any two-edged sword, penetrating even between soul and spirit, joints and marrow, and able to discern reflections and thoughts of the heart» (Heb 4:12). «The natural person does not accept what pertains to the Spirit of God, for to him it is foolishness, and he cannot understand it, because it is judged spiritually» (1 Cor 2:14). «The sheep follow him, because they recognize his voice» (Jn 10:4).

21 «Every one that does he prunes so that it bears more fruit» (Jn 15:2). «No disciple is above his teacher, no slave above his master. It is enough for the disciple that he become like his teacher, for the slave that he become like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more those of his household» (Mt 10:24-25). «Whether it is right in the sight of God for us to obey you rather than God» (Acts 4:19).

22 «Speak, for your servant is listening» (1Sm 3:10). «Be swift to hear, but slow to answer» (Sir 5:11).

23 «I will lead her into the wilderness and speak persuasively to her» (Hos 2:16).

24 «Seek peace and pursue it» (Ps 34:15). «Since he is not the God of disorder but of peace» (1 Cor 14:33). «The peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus» (Phil 4:7).

25 «All belong to you, and you to Christ, and Christ to God» (1 Cor 3:23).

26 «The eye cannot say to the hand, “I do not need you”» (1 Cor 12:21). «We are members of his body» (Eph 5:30).

27 «I am a stranger residing in a foreign land» (Ex 2:22). «I am a sojourner in the land» (Ps 119:19). «Beloved, I urge you as aliens and sojourners to keep away from worldly desires that wage war against the soul» (1 Pt 2:11). Our fathers in faith were «seeking a homeland. If they

had been thinking of the land from which they had come, they would have had opportunity to return. But now they desire a better homeland, a heavenly one» (Heb 11:14-16).

28 «Do not worry about tomorrow; tomorrow will take care of itself» (Mt 6:34). «The seed sown among thorns is the one who hears the word, but then worldly anxiety and the lure of riches choke the word and it bears no fruit» (Mt 13:22).

29 «Brothers, I for my part do not consider myself to have taken possession. Just one thing: forgetting what lies behind but straining forward to what lies ahead, I continue my pursuit toward the goal, the prize of God's upward calling, in Christ Jesus» (Phil 3:13-14).

30 «O God, you are my God it is you I seek! For you my body yearns; for you my soul thirsts, in a land parched, lifeless, and without water» (Ps 63:2). «I urge you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, your spiritual worship» (Rom 12:1). Morning after morning he wakens my ear to hear as disciples do» (Is 50:4).

31 «Constantly seek his face» (Ps 105:4). «Whatever you do, in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus» (Col 3:17). «In all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus» (1 Thes 5:18).

32 «Do this in memory of me» (Lk 22:19). «Do not work for food that perishes but for the food that endures for eternal life» (Jn 6:27).

33 «Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him» (Jn 6:56). «We appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain» (2 Cor 6:1).

34 «For when peaceful stillness encompassed everything and the night in its swift course was half spent, Your all-powerful word from heaven's royal throne leapt into the doomed land» (Wis 18:14-15). «Stay awake! For you do not know on which day your Lord will come» (Mt 24:42; cf. Mk 13:35). «At midnight, there was a cry, "Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!"» (Mt 25:6). «In those days Jesus departed to the mountain to pray, and he spent the night in prayer to God» (Lk 6:12). «Will not God then secure the rights of his chosen ones who call out to him day and night?» (Lk 18:7).

35 Cf. nº 24. «Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give it to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid» (Jn 14:27). «And let the peace of Christ control your hearts, the

peace into which you were also called in one body» (Col 3:15). «May the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times and in every way» (2 Thes 3:16).

36 Song 5:2. «In peace I will lie down and fall asleep, for you alone, Lord, make me secure» (Ps 4:9).

37 «Yet just as from the heavens the rain and snow come down and do not return there till they have watered the earth, making it fertile and fruitful, giving seed to the one who sows and bread to the one who eats, so shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth; It shall not return to me empty, but shall do what pleases me, achieving the end for which I sent it» (Is 55:10-11). «When I found your words, I devoured them; your words were my joy, the happiness of my heart» (Jer 15:16). «One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God» (Mt 4:4). «And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God» (Eph 6:17). «Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly» (Col 3:16). «The sacred scriptures, which are capable of giving you wisdom for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for refutation, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that one who belongs to God may be competent, equipped for every good work» (2 Tm 3:15-17). «The word of God is living and effective, sharper than any two-edged sword, penetrating even between soul and spirit, joints and marrow, and able to discern reflections and thoughts of the heart» (Heb 4:12).

38 «All these devoted themselves with one accord to prayer» (Acts 1:14). «They devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers» (Acts 2:42). «Persevere in prayer» (Col 4:2).

39 Cf. nº 37.

40 Cf. nº 28. «Do not worry about tomorrow; tomorrow will take care of itself» (Mt 6:34). «The kingdom of God is not a matter of food and drink, but of righteousness, peace, and joy in the holy Spirit» (Rom 14:17).

41 «I will bless you as long as I live» (Ps 63:5). «So you could not keep watch with me for one hour?» (Mt 26:40). «Will not God then secure the rights of his chosen ones who call out to him day and night?» (Lk 18:7).

42 «Martha, Martha, you are anxious and worried about many things. There is need of only one thing» (Lk 10:41-42).

43 «For since in the wisdom of God the world did not come to know God through wisdom, it was the will of God through the foolishness of the proclamation» (1 Cor 1:21). «We speak God's wisdom, mysterious, hidden, which God predetermined before the ages for our glory» (1 Cor 2:7). «Knowledge inflates with pride, but love builds up» (1 Cor 8:1).

44 Cf. nº 28.

45 «Unless you turn and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven» (Mt 18:3). «Be simple as doves» (Mt 10:16). «Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given you besides» (Mt 6:33). «This is the work of God, that you believe in the one he sent» (Jn 6:29).

46 «Whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it» (Lk 9:24).

47 Rom 8:28.

48 Cf. nº 3 y 10. «Do not love the world or the things of the world...» (1 Jn 2:15-17). «Martha, Martha, you are anxious and worried about many things. There is need of only one thing» (Lk 10:41-42). «No one can serve two masters. He will either hate one and love the other» (Mt 6:24).

49 «Which one of you would hand his son a stone when he asks for a loaf of bread?...How much more will your heavenly Father give good things to those who ask him» (Mt 7:9-11). «We do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has similarly been tested in every way, yet without sin. So let us confidently approach the throne of grace to receive mercy and to find grace for timely help» (Heb 4:15-16). «Thus we may say with confidence: "The Lord is my helper, and I will not be afraid. What can anyone do to me?"» (Heb 13:6). «Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink» (Mt 6:25). «Into your hands I commend my spirit» (Ps 31:6; cf Lk 23:46).

50 «Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things» (1 Cor 13:7). «Be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving one another as God has forgiven you in Christ» (Eph 4:32).

51 «Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven. Thus they persecuted the prophets who were before you» (Mt 5:12). «Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ» (Col 1:24). «Rejoice to the extent that you share in the sufferings of Christ» (1Pt 4:13).

52 «My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness» (2 Cor 12:9). «If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me» (Lk 9:23). «Blessed is the man who perseveres in temptation, for when he has been proved he will receive the crown of life that he promised to those who love him» (Jas 1:12).

53 Gal 2:19-20. «Many, as I have often told you and now tell you even in tears, conduct themselves as enemies of the cross of Christ» (Phil 3:18-19).

54 «If the world hates you, realize that it hated me first» (Jn 15:18). «God is faithful and will not let you be tried beyond your strength; but with the trial he will also provide a way out, so that you may be able to bear it» (1 Cor 10:13). «I have the strength for everything through him who empowers me» (Phil 4:13). «We even boast of our afflictions, knowing that affliction produces endurance, and endurance, proven character, and proven character, hope and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts» (Rom 5:3-5). «He humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross. Because of this, God greatly exalted him» (Phil 2:8-9).

55 «No slave is greater than his master. If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you» (Jn 15:20).

56 «I urge you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, your spiritual worship» (Rom 12:1).

57 Cf. nº 52 y 54. «Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil» (Mt 4:1). «Watch and pray that you may not undergo the test. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak» (Mt 26:41). «But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts may be corrupted from a sincere [and pure] commitment to Christ» (2 Cor 11:3). «Consider it all joy, my brothers, when you encounter various trials, for you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance» (Jas 1:2-3). «In this you rejoice, although now for a little while you may have to suffer through various trials, so that the genuineness of your faith, more precious than gold that is perishable even though tested by fire, may prove to be for praise, glory, and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ» (1 Pt 1:6-7). «Be sober and vigilant. Your opponent the devil is prowling around like a roaring lion looking for [someone] to devour. Resist him, steadfast in faith, knowing that your

fellow believers throughout the world undergo the same sufferings» (1 Pt 5:8-9).

58 Cf. nº 54. «Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me» (Mt 16:24). «To you has been granted, for the sake of Christ, not only to believe in him but also to suffer for him» (Phil 1:29).

59 «I love you, Lord, my strength» (Ps 18:2). «Is not life on earth a drudgery, its days like those of a hireling?» (Job 7:1). «Compete well for the faith. Lay hold of eternal life, to which you were called» (1Tm 6:12).

60 «Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord alone! Therefore, you shall love the Lord, your God, with your whole heart, and with your whole being, and with your whole strength» (Dt 6:4-5). «Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me» (Mt 10:37).

61 Cf. nº 27. «Where your treasure is, there also will your heart be» (Mt 6:21). «For freedom Christ set us free; so stand firm and do not submit again to the yoke of slavery» (Gal 5:1). «You were called for freedom, brothers. But do not use this freedom as an opportunity for the flesh; rather, serve one another through love» (Gal 5:13).

62 Cf. nº 53. «See; I come with an inscribed scroll written upon me. I delight to do your will, my God» (Ps 40:8-9; cf. Heb 10:7).

63 Cf. nº 51, 53 y 56. «They will seize and persecute you, they will hand you over to the synagogues and to prisons, and they will have you led before kings and governors because of my name. It will lead to your giving testimony» (Lk 21:12-13). «Everyone who acknowledges me before others I will acknowledge before my heavenly Father. But whoever denies me before others, I will deny before my heavenly Father» (Mt 10:32-33). «If you belonged to the world, the world would love its own; but because you do not belong to the world, and I have chosen you out of the world, the world hates you» (Jn 15:19).

64 «What will separate us from the love of Christ?» (Rom 8:35). «I, then, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to live in a manner worthy of the call you have received» (Eph 4:1).

65 «When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the infant leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth, filled with the holy Spirit» (Lk 1:41). «Even if you should have countless guides to Christ, yet you do not have many fathers, for I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel» (1 Cor 4:15).

66 «Where words are many, sin is not wanting; but those who restrain their lips do well» (Prv 10:19). «Be steadfast regarding your knowledge, and let your speech be consistent. Be swift to hear, but slow to answer. If you can, answer your neighbor; if not, place your hand over your mouth!» (Sir 5:10-12).

67 «I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower. He takes away every branch in me that does not bear fruit, and every one that does he prunes so that it bears more fruit» (Jn 15:1-2). «Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit» (Jn 12:24).

68 «As the Father loves me, so I also love you. Remain in my love» (Jn 15:9). «You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden» (Mt 5:14). «The lamp of the body is the eye. If your eye is sound, your whole body will be filled with light» (Mt 6:23). «For God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to bring to light the knowledge of the glory of God on the face of [Jesus] Christ» (2 Cor 4:6). «You were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light, for light produces every kind of goodness and righteousness and truth» (Eph 5:8-9).

69 Cf. nº 18, 20 y 22. «Set a guard, Lord, before my mouth, keep watch over the door of my lips» (Ps 141:3). «If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, his religion is vain» (Jas 1:26).

70 «Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given you besides» (Mt 6:33). «Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope, but do it with gentleness and reverence» (1 Pt 3:15-16).

71 «My message and my proclamation were not with persuasive words of wisdom, but with a demonstration of spirit and power» (1 Cor 2:4).

72 «Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven» (Mt 18:4). «Whoever wishes to be great among you will be your servant» (Mk 10:43). «Do nothing out of selfishness or out of vainglory; rather, humbly regard others as more important than yourselves. Have among yourselves the same attitude that is also yours in Christ Jesus. Who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human

in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross» (Phil 2:3.5-7).

73 «Take care not to perform righteous deeds in order that people may see them; otherwise, you will have no recompense from your heavenly Father» (Mt 6:1). «If you love those who love you, what recompense will you have?» (Mt 5:46).

74 «The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control» (Gal 2:22). «Be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving one another as God has forgiven you in Christ» (Eph 4:32). «Welcome one another, then, as Christ welcomed you, for the glory of God» (Rom 15:7).

75 «“My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness.”... I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and constraint for the sake of Christ; for when I am weak, then I am strong» (2 Cor 12:9-10). «God chose the foolish of the world to shame the wise, and God chose the weak of the world to shame the strong» (1 Cor 1:27). «The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God» (1 Cor 1:18).

76 «Beloved, do not be surprised that a trial by fire is occurring among you, as if something strange were happening to you. But rejoice to the extent that you share in the sufferings of Christ, so that when his glory is revealed you may also rejoice exultantly» (1 Pt 4:12-13).