

DEVOTION OF THE FIVE FIRST SATURDAYS

A. What is this devotion?:

“It consists in going to Confession, receiving Communion, reciting five decades of the Rosary and meditating for a quarter of an hour on the mysteries of the Rosary on the first Saturday of five consecutive months. The Confession may be made during the eight days preceding or following the first Saturday of each month, provided that Holy Communion be received in the state of grace. Should one forget to form the intention of making reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, it may be formed at the next Confession, occasion to go to confession being taken at the first opportunity.” (Dom Jose Correia da Silva, first Bishop of Fatima)

B. Why five Saturdays?:

1. Our Lord Jesus Christ explained to Sr. Lucia May 29, 1930 that it was because of five kinds of offenses and blasphemies against the Immaculate Heart of Mary, namely: blasphemies against her Immaculate Conception, against her perpetual virginity, against the divine and spiritual maternity of Mary, blasphemies involving the rejection and dishonoring of her images, and the neglect of implanting in the hearts of children a knowledge and love of this Immaculate Mother.

2. During her July apparition at Fatima, Our Lady said to Lucia, *“I shall come to ask... that on the First Saturday of every month, Communions of reparation be made in atonement for the sins of the world.”* Our Lady invites us to insert between the decades a prayer of reparation: *“O my Jesus, forgive us our sins; save us from the fires of Hell. Lead all souls to Heaven, especially those who have most need of Thy mercy.”*

3. *“Whether the world has war or peace depends on the practice of this devotion, along with the consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. This is why I desire its propagation so ardently, especially because this is also the will of our dear Mother in Heaven.”* -Sr. Lucy (March 19, 1939)

4. To those who faithfully follow our Lady’s requests for the Five First Saturdays, she promised on December 10, 1925: *“to assist at the hour of death with the graces necessary for salvation.”* This means her presence at the hour of death with the actual grace of final perseverance.

Although it is not impossible that such a soul be saved at that eleventh hour, it is much more likely that those who sincerely apply themselves to the devotion of the Five First Saturdays, and persevere in making their devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary a way of life, will thus be living in a habitual state of grace. This is consistent with the warning of Christ, *“As you live, so shall you die.”* For such blessed souls, their First Saturday devotion, and their consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, will be the happy means by which they fall among the number of the elect -- those who actually benefit by the fruits of the Redemption and are saved.

C. The spirit of reparation:

It is a loving desire to make reparation to and console the Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary. It considers the offenses which the Immaculate Heart of Mary now receives from those who reject her maternal intervention and despise her prerogatives.

Simply make the resolution that all the spiritual exercises connected with the First Saturdays will be offered in reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. As long as this intention is not withdrawn, it would remain effective, even though at the moment of the exercise one does not consciously recall his motive of making reparation.

D. Confess and receive Holy Communion:

On February 15, 1926 Sr. Lucia spoke to our Lord of a difficulty some people have in confessing on the first Saturday, and asked if they might be allowed eight days in order to fulfill Our Lady's requests. He answered: *“Yes, even more time still, as long as they receive Me in the state of grace and have the intention of making reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.”*

The Communion of reparation must be sacramental (actual reception of the sacred Species), duly received with the intention of making reparation. This offering, like the confession, is an interior act,

and so no external action to express the intention is needed. The communion must be made within twenty-four hours of the First Saturday. For good reason, approved by our Pastor, we may receive the Communion on the next day, the Sunday following the First Saturday. Our Lord answered Sr. Lucy on May 29, 1930: *“The practice of this devotion will be equally acceptable on the Sunday following the first Saturday when my priests, for a just cause, allow the faithful.”*

E. Recite the Rosary

Five decades of the Rosary may be recited at any time or place; yet, since one will be attending Mass in order to receive Holy Communion, a very desirable time and place would be before or after Mass in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. Meditation on the mysteries according to one's capacity is an essential condition for praying the Rosary. Yet, involuntary distractions do not rob the Rosary of fruit if one is doing the best he can.

F. Meditate

“Keep me company for fifteen minutes while meditating on the mysteries of the Rosary.” The question is often asked: Does the meditation while reciting the Rosary fulfill this condition, or is there required an additional fifteen minutes of meditation? That an additional 15 minutes of meditation is required was confirmed by Sr. Lucia of Fatima and from a statement by the first Bishop of Fatima.

But we should take care to truly meditate. Meditation consists in thinking over the events as if we were actually present at the scenes mentioned in the Mystery, or in considering what we would have done had we been present. Finally, meditation concludes with a determination or resolution of some sort to amend our life, according to the lesson taught in the Mystery, in our behavior at home, at work, in our dealings with others, etc. The meditation embraces one or more mysteries; it may even include all, taken together or separately, according to individual attraction or devotion; but it is preferable to meditate on one mystery each month.

Many find it difficult to meditate because they have never made the attempt to do so. But a start could be made by using holy pictures depicting the different Mysteries, or by reading slowly and devoutly appropriate meditations prepared for our use, or even by reading the Gospel narratives containing the Mysteries, with or without commentaries.

G. Five Consecutive First Saturdays

The idea of the Five First Saturdays is obviously to make us persevere in these devotional acts for this period of time, and to overcome the initial obstacles. Once this is done, Our Lady knows that the person will -- if he faithfully cooperates with her grace -- become attracted to her pure and Immaculate Heart, and persevere in practicing such devotion on all First Saturdays, laboring thereby at his own personal sanctification, and for the salvation of others.

H. Conclusion:

If mankind does not repent and return to God; if Catholics continue to fail *“to amend their lives and ask pardon for their sins”*; if the true consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary does not become a way of life for many; if Our Lady's requests continue to be rejected, the future course of mankind appears grim: Russia will not be converted. The Islamic movement will solidify its alliance with Marxism. And the wars ensuing from this new and deadly peril will continue to be a punishment for the multitude of sins against God. Their anti-Christ errors which emanated from Russia in the last century *“will continue to spread, promoting wars and persecutions against the Church”*, and engulfing the world in an inferno of Luciferian triumph. Not the least of these evils will be the vast number of souls who depart from this hedonistic world in the state of mortal sin, and are lost for all eternity in the flames of Hell.

The only means of preventing these tragedies is to respond to the gentle but urgent pleas of our loving Mother at Fatima. The stakes are so high at this perilous moment of history, that one would think every good Catholic would take seriously the devotion of the Five First Saturdays, and practice it fervently.