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J.M.J.

THE PROTESTATION FOR DEATH

—*Saint Alphonsus Liguori*



My God, prostrate in Thy presence, I adore Thee; and I intend to make the following protestation, as if I were on the point of passing from this life into eternity.

My Lord, because Thou art the infallible Truth, and hast revealed it to the holy Church, I believe in the mystery of the Most Holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Three Persons, but only one God; Who for all eternity rewards the just in heaven, and punishes the wicked in hell. I believe that the Second Person, that is the Son of God, became man and died for the salvation of mankind; and I believe all that the holy Church believes. I thank Thee for having made me a Christian, and I protest that I will live and die in this holy faith.

My God, my hope, trusting in Thy promises I hope from Thy mercy, not through my own

merits, but through the merits of Jesus Christ, for the pardon of my sins, perseverance, and after this miserable life, the glory of paradise. And should the devil at death tempt me to despair at the sight of my sins, I protest that I will always hope in Thee, O Lord, and that I desire to die in the loving arms of Thy goodness.

O God, worthy of infinite love, I love Thee with my whole heart, more than I love myself; and I protest that I desire to die making an act of love, that I may thus continue to love Thee eternally in heaven, which for this end I desire and ask of Thee. And if hitherto, O Lord, instead of loving Thee, I have despised Thy infinite goodness, I repent of it with all my heart, and I protest that I wish to die always weeping over, and detesting, the offences I have committed against Thee. I purpose for the

future rather to die than ever to sin again; and for the love of Thee, I pardon all who have offended me. O God, I accept of death, and of all the suffering which will accompany it; I unite it with the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ, and offer it in acknowledgment of Thy supreme dominion, and in satisfaction for my sins.

Do Thou, O Lord, accept of this sacrifice, which I make of my life, for the love of that great sacrifice which Thy divine Son made of Himself upon the altar of the cross. I resign myself entirely to Thy divine will, as though I were now on my deathbed, and protest that I wish to die, saying: "O Lord, always Thy will be done!"

Most holy Virgin, my advocate and my Mother, Mary, thou art and wilt always be, after God, my hope and my consolation at the hour of death.

From this moment I have recourse to thee, and beg of thee to assist me in that passage. O my dear Queen, do not abandon me in that last moment; come then to take my soul and present it to thy Son. Henceforward I shall expect thee; and I hope to die under thy mantle and clinging to thy feet.

My protector St Joseph, St Michael archangel, my angel guardian, my holy patrons, do you all assist me in that last combat with hell. And Thou, my crucified Love, Thou, my Jesus, Who wert pleased to choose for Thyself so bitter a death to obtain for me a good death, remember at that hour, that I am one of those dear sheep Thou didst purchase with Thy blood. Thou Who, when all the world shall have forsaken me, and not one shall be able to assist me, canst alone console me and save me.

Do Thou make me worthy then to receive Thee in the Viaticum, and suffer me not to lose Thee forever and to be banished forever to a distance from Thee. No, my beloved Saviour, receive me then into Thy sacred wounds, for I now embrace Thee. At my last breath I intend to breathe forth my soul into the loving wound in Thy side, saying now for that moment, "Jesus and Mary, I give you my heart and my soul!"

R. Jesus and Mary, I give you my heart and my soul.

O happy suffering, to suffer for God! Happy death, to die in the Lord! I embrace Thee now, my good Redeemer, that I may die in Thy embraces. If, O my soul, Mary assists thee at thy departure, and Jesus receives thy last breath, it will not be death, but a sweet repose.



J.M.J.

PRAYER OF WILLING ACCEPTANCE OF DEATH

—*Saint Alphonsus Liguori*



O my Jesus, I offer Thee my life and am ready to die when it pleases Thee. "Thy will be done."

Lord, if it pleases Thee to leave me still for a time on this earth, may Thy name be praised. Yet I would not wish to live longer, if my life were not wholly to be employed in loving and glorifying Thee. If it be Thy will that I die of this or of some other illness, may Thy holy name be equally praised. I receive death in order to fulfil Thy will; all I ask of Thee is to assist me in my last hour. "Have mercy on me, O God, according to Thy great mercy."

If it is Thy will that I should leave this earth, I protest that I will die, because so it is Thy will.

I will also die in order that, by the anguish and bitterness of my death, I may offer satisfaction to the divine justice for the many sins by which I have offended it

and have thereby deserved hell.

I will also die that I may no longer be able to offend Thee or cause Thee any displeasure. I will die to show Thee my gratitude for the numerous benefits and favors which, in spite of my unworthiness, I have received at Thy hands.

I will die to show that I love Thy will more than my life.

I wish, if it so pleases Thee, to die now while I hope to be in Thy grace, in order to be sure of praising and extolling Thee forever.

But above all, I will die in order to love Thee with all my strength and forever in heaven, where through Thy precious blood, O my Saviour, I hope to arrive some day, and where I shall be certain to love Thee unceasingly.

My Jesus, through love of me Thou didst will to suffer death on the cross; behold, I also

through love of Thee accept death with all the sufferings which await me in my last hour, saying with St. Francis: "Let me die, O Lord, through love of Thee, Who didst die through love of me."

O my Redeemer, my Love, my only Good, I beseech Thee through Thy sacred wounds and painful death, let me die in Thy grace and love.

O Jesus, my Saviour, I beseech Thee most particularly through the pains Thou didst endure when Thy most holy soul was separated from Thy adorable body, graciously to receive my soul on its leaving my body.

O Mother of God, most blessed Virgin Mary, intercede with Jesus for me at the hour of my death, when in a most special manner I shall be in need of thy assistance.

O Mary, Mother of grace,

Mother of mercy, shield us from the enemy and receive us in the hour of death. To thy protection we fly, O holy Mother of God! Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners.

O holy Joseph, my loving Father, assist me in that decisive moment.

St. Michael, the archangel, deliver me from the evil spirits who lay snares for my soul.

My holy patron, and all ye saints of heaven, pray to God for me. Amen.

DESIRE OF HEAVEN

Those souls who had but a faint desire of heaven will have a special pain to endure in purgatory; that is the so-called pain of desire or yearning. This life is a prison, a place of punishment, where we cannot see God. Therefore David prayed: "Conduct my soul out of prison." And St. Augustine exclaims: "Let me die, O Lord, that I may see Thee." Say therefore:

I desire heaven, in order to love Thee, O my God, forever and with all my strength.

When shall I be able to say: My God, now I can no longer lose Thee?

When, O my God, shall I behold Thy infinite beauty and love Thee face to face?

In heaven I shall always love Thee and Thou wilt always love me; we shall then forever love each other, O my God, my Love and my All!

My Jesus, when shall I kiss the wounds Thou hast received for me?

O Mary, my Mother, thou who hast lavished so much love and help upon me, when shall I come to see thee and prostrate myself at thy feet?

Turn then, my gracious advocate, thy merciful eyes towards me, and after this exile show unto me Jesus, the blessed fruit of thy womb!