

THE DIARY:
OR,
RULE
TO
**SPEND EACH DAY
RELIGIOUSLY**

Excerpted from

The Golden Grove,

Authored by that most *venerable* and *pious Cleric*,

THE RIGHT REVEREND
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THE DEVIL'S ARTISAN

A Short Prayer to be Said every Morning

O Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the God of mercy and comfort, with reverence and fear, with humble confidence and strong desires, I approach to the Throne of Grace, begging of thee mercy and protection, pardon and salvation. O my God, I am a sinner, but sorrowful and repenting: Thou art justly offended at me, but yet thou art my Lord and my Father, merciful and gracious: Be pleased to blot all my sins out of thy remembrance, and heal my soul, that I may never any more sin against thee. Lord open my eyes, that I may see my own infirmities, and watch against them; and my own follies, that I may amend them: and be pleased to give me perfect understanding in the way of godliness, that I may walk in it all the days of my pilgrimage. Give me a spirit diligent in the works of my Calling, cheerful and zealous in Religion, fervent and frequent in my Prayers, charitable and useful in my conversation: Give me a healthful and a chaste body, a pure and a holy soul, a sanctified and an humble spirit; and let my body and soul and spirit be preserved unblameable to the coming of the Lord Jesus. *Amen.*

Waking

Suppose every day to be a day of business: for your whole life is a race, and a battle; a merchandise, and a journey. Every day propound to your self a Rosary or a Chaplet of good Works, to present to God at night.

2. Rise as soon as your health and other occasions shall permit; but it is good to be as regular as you can, and as early. Remember, he that rises first to Prayer, hath a more early title to a blessing. But he that changes night into day, labour into idleness, watchfulness to sleep, changes his hopes of blessing into a dream.

3. Never let any one think it an excuse to lie in bed, because he hath nothing to do when he is up: for whoever hath a Soul, and hopes to save that Soul, hath work enough to do to make his calling and election sure; to serve God, and to pray; to read, and to meditate; to repent and to amend; to do good to others, and to keep evil from themselves. And if thou hast little to do, thou ought'st to employ the more time in laying up for a greater Crown of Glory.

4. At your opening your eyes, enter upon the day with some act of piety.

1. Of thanksgiving for the preservation of you the night past.

2. Of the glorification of God for the works of the Creation, or any thing for the honor of God.

5. When you first go off from your bed, solemnly and devoutly bow your head, and worship the holy Trinity, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Readying

Readying for the Day

When you are making ready, be as silent as you can, and spend that time in holy thoughts; there being no way left to redeem that time from loss, but by meditation and short mental prayers. If you choose to speak, speak something of God's praises, of his goodness, his mercies, or his greatness: Ever resolving, that the first fruits of thy reason, and of all thy faculties shall be presented to God, to sanctify the whole harvest of thy conversation.

7. Be not curious, nor careless in your habit, but always keep these measures.

1. Be not troublesome to thyself, or to others, by unhandsomeness or uncleanness.
2. Let it be according to your state and quality.
3. Make Religion to be the difference of your habit, so as to be best attired upon Holy or Festival days.

8. In your dressing, let there be ejaculations fitted to the several actions of dressing: as at washing your hands and face, pray God to cleanse your Soul from sin: In putting on your clothes, pray him to clothe your Soul with the righteousness of your Savior; and so in all the rest.

For Religion must not only be the garment of your Soul, to invest it all over; but it must be also as the fringes to every of your actions, that something of Religion appear in every one of them, besides the innocence of all of them.

9. As soon as you are dressed with the first preparation of your clothes, that you can decently do it, kneel and
say

say the Lord's Prayer; then rise from your knees, and do what is necessary for you in order to your further dressing, or affairs of the house, which is speedily to be done; and then finish your dressing according to the foregoing Rules.

Morning Prayer

When you are dressed, retire yourself to your Closet; and go to your usual devotions, which it is good that at the first prayers they divided were into seven actions of piety.

1. An act of Adoration.
2. Of Thanksgiving.
3. Of Oblation.
4. Of Confession.
5. Of Petition.
6. Of Intercession.
7. Of Meditation, or serious, deliberate, useful reading of the holy Scriptures.

11. I advise that your reading should be governed by these measures.

1. Let it be not of the whole Bible in order, but for your devotion use the New Testament, and such portions of the Old as contain the Precepts of holy life.
2. The Historical and less useful part, let it be read at such other times which you have of leisure from your domestic employments.
3. Those portions of Scripture which you use in your Prayers, let them not be long. A Chapter at once; no more: but then what time you can afford, spend it in thinking and meditating upon the holy Precepts which you read.

4. Be

4. Be sure to meditate so long, till you make some act of piety upon the occasion of what you meditate; either that you get some new arguments against a sin, or some new encouragements to virtue; some spiritual strength and advantage, or else some act of Prayer to God, or glorification of him.

5. I advise that you would read your Chapter in the midst of your Prayers in the Morning, if they be divided according to the number of the former actions; because little interruptions will be apt to make your Prayers less tedious, and yourself more attent upon them: But if you find any other way more agreeing to your spirit and disposition, use your liberty without scruple.

12. Before you go forth of your Closet, after your Prayers are done, set yourself down a little while, and consider what you are to do that day, what matter of business is like to employ you or to tempt you; and take particular resolution against that, whether it be matter of wrangling, or anger, or covetousness, or vain courtship, or feasting: and when you enter upon it, remember, upon what you resolved in your Closet. If you are likely to have nothing extraordinary that day a general recommendation of the affairs of that day to God in your Prayers will be sufficient: but if there be any thing foreseen that is not usual, be sure to be armed for it, by a hearty though a short Prayer, and an earnest prudent resolution beforehand, and then watch when the thing comes.

13. Whosoever hath Children or Servants, let him or her take care, that all the Children and Servants of the family say their Prayers before they begin their work.

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The Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, with the short verse at the end of every Commandment, which the Church uses, and the Creed, is a very good office for them, if they be not fitted for more regular offices. And to these also it were good, that some proper Prayer were apportioned, and they taught it. It were well if they would serve themselves of this form set down at the end of this Diary.

The Business of the Day

Then go about the affairs of your house and proper employment, ever avoiding idleness, or too much earnestness of affection upon the things of the world: Do your business prudently, temperately, diligently, humbly, charitably.

15. Let there be no idle person in or about your family, of beggars, or unemployed Servants, but find them all work and meat; call upon them carefully; reprove them without reproaches, or fierce railings. Be a master or a mistress, and a friend to them, and exact of them to be faithful and diligent.

16. In your Servants suffer any offense against yourself, rather than against God; endure not that they should swear, or lie, or steal, or be wanton, or curse each other, or be railers, or slanderers, or telltales, or sowers of dissension in the family, or amongst neighbors.

17. In all your intercourse with your neighbors in the day, let your affairs be wholly matter of business or civility, and always managed with Justice and Charity; never let it be matter of curiosity or inquiry into the actions of others; always without censuring or rash judgement

judgement, without backbiting, slandering, or detraction: Do it not yourself, neither converse with them that do. He or she that loves tale-bearers, shall never be beloved, or be innocent.

The Evening Meal

Before dinner and supper, as often as it is convenient, or can be had, let the public Prayers of the Church, or some parts of them, be said publicly in the family, and let as many be present as you can. The same rule is also to be observed for Sundays and Holy-days for their going to Church. Let no Servant be always detained, but relieved and provided for by changes.

19. Let your meal be temperate and wholesome, according to your quality, and the season, begun and ended with Prayer; and be sure that in the course of your meal, and before you rise, you recollect yourself, and send your heart up to God with some holy and short ejaculation; remembering your duty, fearing to offend, or desiring and sighing after the Eternal Supper of the Lamb.

20. After meal, use what innocent refreshment you please, to refresh your mind or body, with these measures:

1. Let it not be too expensive of time.
2. Let it not hinder your devotion, nor your business.
3. Let it be always without violence or passion.
4. Let it not then wholly take you up when you are at it; but let your heart retire with some holy thoughts, and sober recollections, lest your mind be seized

seized upon by it, and your affections carried off from better things: secure your affections for God, and sober and severe employment. Here you may be refreshed, but take heed you neither dwell here, nor sin here. It is better never to use recreation, then at any time to sin by it. But you may use recreation, and avoid sin, and that's the best temper: But if you cannot do both, be more careful of your soul, then of your refreshment, and that's the best security. But then in what you use to sin, carefully avoid it, and change your refreshment for some other instance in which you can be more innocent.

21. Entertain no long discourses with any, but if you can bring in something to season it with Religion: as God must be in all your thoughts, so if it be possible, let him be in all your discourses, at least let him be at one end of it; and when you cannot speak of him, be sure you forget not to think of him.

Evening Prayer

Toward the declining of the day, be sure to retire to your private devotions. Read, meditate, and pray; In which I propound to you this method: On the Lord's Day meditate of the glories of the Creation, the works of God, and all his benefits to Mankind, and to you in particular. Then let your devotion be humbly upon your knees, to say over the 8th and 19th Psalms, and sometimes the 104th, with proper Collects which you shall find or get: Adding the form of thanksgiving which is in *The Rule of Holy Living*, in the manner as is there directed; or some other of your own choosing.

Meditate

Meditate on { Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, } on { 1. Death, 2. Judgement, 3. Heaven, 4. Hell, }

Saying your usual Prayers, and adding some ejaculations or short sayings of your own, according to the matter of your devotion.

On Friday, recollect your sins that you have done that week, and all your lifetime; and let your devotion be to recite humbly and devoutly some penitential litanies, whereof you may serve yourself in *The Rule of Holy Living*.

On Saturday at the same time, meditate on the passion of our blessed Savior and on the mysteries of our Redemption, which you may do and pray together, by using the forms made to that purpose in *The Rule of Holy Living*. In all your devotions begin and end with the Lord's Prayer.

Upon these two days, and Sunday, you may choose some portions out of *The Life of Christ*, to read and help your meditation, proper to the mysteries you are appointed to meditate, or any other devout books.

23. Read not much at a time; but meditate as much as your time and capacity and disposition will give you leave; ever remembering, that little reading, and much thinking; little speaking, and much hearing; frequent and short prayers, and great devotion, is the best way to be wise, to be holy, to be devout.

Close

Close of Day

Before you go to bed, bethink yourself of the day past; if nothing extraordinary hath happened, your Conscience is the sooner examined; but if you have had any difference or disagreeing with any one, or a great feast, or great company or a great joy, or a great sorrow, then recollect yourself with the more diligence to ask pardon for what is amiss; give God thanks for what was good: if you have omitted any duty, make amends next day; and yet if nothing be found that was amiss, be humbled still and thankful, and pray God for pardon if any thing be amiss that you know not of. If all these things be in your offices, for your last prayers, be sure to apply them according to what you find in your examination: but if they be not, supply them with short ejaculations before you begin your last prayers, or at the end of them. Remember also, and be sure to take notice of all the mercies and deliverances of yourself, and your relatives that day.

25. As you are going to bed, as often as you can conveniently, or that you are not hindered by company, meditate of death, and the preparations to your grave. When you lie down, close your eyes with short Prayer, commit yourself into the hands of your faithful Creator; and when you have done, trust him with yourself, as you must do when you are dying.

26. If you awake in the night, fill up the intervals or spaces of your not sleeping by holy thoughts and aspirations, and remember the sins of your youth: and sometimes remember your dead, and that you shall die; and pray to God to send to you and all mankind a mercy in the day of Judgement.

Holy

Holy Days

Upon the Holy-days observe the same Rules; only let the matter of your meditations be according to the mystery of the day. As upon Christmas Day meditate on the birth of our blessed Savior, and read that story and Considerations which are in *The Life of Christ*: and to your ordinary devotions of every day adde the Prayer which is fitted to the mystery which you shall find in *The Life of Christ*, or in *The Rule of Holy Living*. Upon the day of the Annunciation or our Lady-Day, meditate on the incarnation of our blessed Savior; and so upon all the Festivals of the year.

Fasting

Set apart one day for fasting once a week, or once a fortnight, or once a month at least, but let it be with these cautions and measures.

1. Do not choose a festival of the Church for your fasting day.
2. Eat nothing till your afternoon devotions be done, if the health of your body will permit it: if not, take something, though it be the less.
3. When you eat your meal, let it be no more than ordinary, lest your fasting day end in an intemperate evening.
4. Let the actions of all the day be proportionable to it: Abstain from your usual recreations on that day, and from greater mirth.
5. Be sure to design beforehand the purposes of your fast, either for Repentance, or for Mortification or for the advantages of Prayer; and let your devotions be accordingly. But be sure, not to think fasting or eating fish or eating nothing, of
itself

itself to be pleasing to God, but as it serves to one of these purposes.

6. Let some part of that day extraordinary be set apart for Prayer, for the actions of Repentance, for confession of sins, and for begging of those graces for whose sake you set apart that day.

7. Be sure that on that day you set apart something for the poor; for Fasting and Alms are the wings of Prayer.

8. It is best to choose that day for your fast, which is used generally by all Christians, as Friday and Saturday; but do not call it a fasting day, unless also it be a day of extraordinary devotion and of alms.

29. From observation of all the days of your life, gather out the four extraordinaries.

1. All the great and shameful sins you have committed.

2. All the excellent or greater acts of piety which by God's grace you have performed.

3. All the great blessings you have received.

4. All the dangers and great sicknesses you have escaped; and upon all the days of your extraordinary devotions, let them be brought forth, and produce their acts of virtue.

1. Repentance and Prayers for pardon.

2. Resolutions to proceed and increase in good works.

3. Thanksgiving to God.

4. Fear and watchfulness, lest we fall into worse, as a punishment for our sin.

30. Keep a little Catalogue of these, and at the foot of them set down what Promises and Vows you have made, and kept or broken, and do according as you are obliged.

Miscellaneous

Receive the blessed Sacrament as often as you can: endeavor to have it once a month, besides the solemn and great Festivals of the year.

32. Confess your sins often, hear the Word of God, make Religion the business of your life, your study, and chiefest care, and be sure that in all things a spiritual guide take you by the hand.

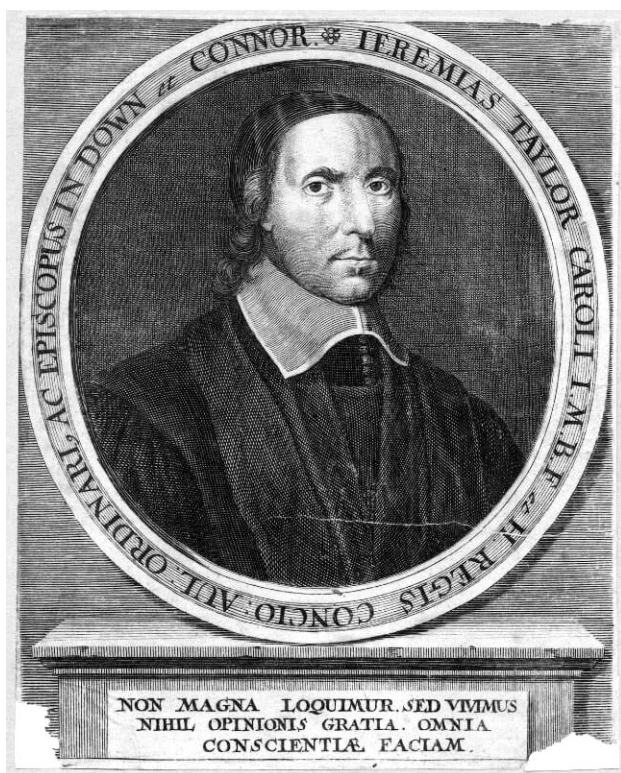
*Thou shalt always rejoice in the evening,
if thou dost spend thy day virtuously.*

FINIS



A Prayer for a holy and happy Death

O eternal and holy Jesus, who by death hast overcome death, and by thy Passion hast taken out its sting, and made it to become one of the gates of heaven, and an entrance to felicity; have mercy upon me now and at the hour of my death; let thy grace accompany me all the days of my life, that I may by a holy conversation, and an habitual performance of my duty, wait for the coming of our Lord, and be ready to enter with thee at whatsoever hour thou shalt come. Lord let not my death be in any sense unprovided, nor untimely, nor hasty, but after the manner of men, having in it nothing extraordinary, but an extraordinary piety, and the manifestation of a great and miraculous mercy. Let my senses and my understanding be preserved entire till the last of my days, and grant that I may die the death of the righteous, free from debt and deadly sin, having first discharged all my obligations of Justice, leaving none miserable and unprovided in my departure; but be thou the portion of all my friends and relatives, and let thy blessing descend upon their heads, and abide there till they shall meet me in the bosom of our Lord. Preserve me ever in the communion and peace of the Church; and bless my Death-bed with the opportunity of a holy and a spiritual Guide, with the assistance and guard of Angels, with the reception of the holy Sacrament, with patience and dereliction of my own desires, with a strong faith, and a firm and humbled hope, with just measures of repentance, and great treasures of charity to thee my God, and to all the world, that my soul in the arms of the holy Jesus, may be deposited with safety and joy, there to expect the revelation of thy day, and then to partake the glories of thy Kingdom, O eternal and holy Jesus. *Amen.*



Portrait courtesy of The National Portrait Gallery

St. Jeremy Taylor

BISHOP AND THEOLOGIAN, 1667

O God, whose days are without end, and whose mercies cannot be numbered: Make us, we beseech thee, like thy servant Jeremy Taylor, deeply sensible of the shortness and uncertainty of human life; and let thy Holy Ghost lead us in holiness and righteousness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

—Lesser Feasts and Fasts 2024