

St. Joseph Society



Objective: This series aims to guide men toward Christlike maturity by exploring the Armor of God as a framework for masculine virtue. In integrating Sacred Scripture, Catholic doctrine, and the wisdom contained in Fr. Lasance's *The Young Man's Guide*, men will be equipped to strengthen their faith, cultivate moral discipline, and foster brotherhood so that they may engage in spiritual combat and grow in holiness.

Podcast Schedule

- Episode #1: The Armor of God – Becoming a Christlike Man
- Episode #2: The Shield of Faith
- Episode #3: The Helmet of Hope
- Episode #4: The Arrow of the Love of God
- Episode #5: The Lance of the Fear of God
- Episode #6: The Sword of Respect for Authority
- Episode #7: The Breastplate of Justice
- Episode #8: The Girdle of Self-Control

Episode #1: The Armor of God – Becoming a Christlike Man

I. Introduction

1. Ephesians 6:10-18 – Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the equipment of the gospel of peace; above all taking the shield of faith, with which you can quench all the flaming darts of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Pray at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints
2. The Armor of God Overview
 - a. Episode #2: The Shield of Faith
 - b. Episode #3: The Helmet of Hope
 - c. Episode #4: The Arrow of the Love of God
 - d. Episode #5: The Lance of the Fear of God
 - e. Episode #6: The Sword of Respect for Authority
 - f. Episode #7: The Breastplate of Justice
 - g. Episode #8: The Girdle of Self-Control

II. Manliness – What do men need today?

1. Adventure & Vision
 - a. Vision – “Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might” (Eph. 6:10).
 - i. In Latin, man is *vir*, which is also the root word for the word *virtu*, which means strength. In essence, to be a *vir* is to be the embodiment of strength. To be virtuous is to be manly.
 - ii. *The Young Man’s Guide* by Fr. F.X. Lasance – “Manliness implies self-control, conscientiousness, moral courage, fearless discharge of duty in the face of obloquy (ah-blu-kwee – def. strong public criticism or verbal abuse) and prejudice, firm determination to do what is right because it is right and pleasing to God, without regard to human respect, expediency, or popularity, a steadfast adherence to one’s religious principles and convictions – in a word, an upright Christian character.”

- b. Adventure – There is no greater adventure than following Christ.
 - i. Matthew 16:24 – “If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.”
 - ii. John 10:10 – “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.”

2. Discipline – A Rule of Life

- a. “The Pain of Discipline or the Pain of Regret.”
- b. The Way of St. Joseph – A commitment to pursuing a life of virtue in mind, body, and spirit.

3. Brotherhood – A Tribe

- a. *The Spiritual Life* – “Friendship can become a means of sanctification or a serious obstacle to perfection accordingly as it is supernatural or merely natural and sentimental in character” (Tanquerey, 285).
- b. *Tribe* by Sebastian Junger – “Human beings lose the ability to connect emotionally with people after a certain number, right around 150.”
- c. Male Community – Military
 - i. Squad – 6-10 Men
 - ii. Platoon – 3-4 Squads (18-40 Men)
 - iii. Company – 3-4 Platoons (54-160 Men)

III. Application

- 1. Fr. Lasance – “Strive to be a manly man! A manly man is a man of character; one who is controlled by conscience; one who does his duty under all circumstances; one who is swayed by reason, by faith, by moral principles – not by every passing impulse, not by transient emotions, not by fancy or caprice, not by human respect. A manly man is one who is endowed with the courage of his convictions; one who is conscientious, sincere, truthful, honest, upright, just and charitable, unselfish and magnanimous, kind and gentle; one who practises what he preaches, whose life is consistent with his faith” (410).
- 2. Manly Piety – Fr. Lasance
 - a. Manly piety consists “In this – that man’s will (which constitutes his manliness) be employed in its full strength for God’s honor and glory, in His holy service” (414).
 - b. “The world needs men – not grand geniuses or plausible talkers. It is not sentimentality and dreams that will save it, but acts and deeds. It was not merely by revelations and visions that the saints became such, but by spiritual combat, by self-denial, and overcoming the enemies of their souls” (415).

Episode #2: The Shield of Faith

I. Introduction

1. Ephesians 6:10, 13-18 – Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. . . . take the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the equipment of the gospel of peace; above all **taking the shield of faith, with which you can quench all the flaming darts of the evil one.** And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Pray at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints
2. The Enemy – The World, the Flesh, and the Devil
3. Manliness – What do men need today?
 - a. Adventure & Vision
 - b. Discipline – A Rule of Life
 - c. Brotherhood – A Tribe
4. Application – Fr. Lasance – “Strive to be a manly man!” (410) for manly piety consists in this “that man’s will (which constitutes his manliness) be employed in its full strength for God’s honor and glory, in His holy service” (414).

II. The Shield of Faith

1. Faith: The Pearl of Great Price
 - a. Matthew 8:45-46 – “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it.”
 - b. Fr. Lasance – “The one pearl without price is the true faith and the state of grace. Guard this treasure carefully. Sacrifice everything to preserve your faith and the grace and the love of God” (46-47).
2. Christ Conquers and Christ Reigns
 - a. Fr. Lasance – “In front of St. Peter’s in Rome there stands a lofty obelisk which the ancient Romans brought over from Egypt. For centuries it remained buried deep under heaps of rubbish; Pope Sixtus V caused it to be set up once more, and this inscription to be engraved upon it: “*Christus vincit, Christus regnat, Christus imperat; Christus nos ab omni malo liberat.*” “Christ conquers, Christ reigns, Christ governs; Christ delivers us from every evil” (30).
 - b. Christ Conquers in His Glorious Resurrection
 - c. Christ Reigns in the Holy Roman Catholic Church

3. The Nature of Faith: What is it?

- a. Hebrews 11:1 – “Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”
- b. St. Thomas Aquinas defines faith as "the act of the intellect assenting to a Divine truth owing to the movement of the will, which is itself moved by the grace of God" (ST, II-II, Q. iv, a. 2).
- c. Faith is belief based on authority.

4. The Necessity of Faith: Why do I need it?

- a. Mark 16:16 – Jesus says, “He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.”
- b. Hebrews 11:6 – “Without faith it is impossible to please him [God]. For whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.”

III. Application – Four Suggestions

- 1. Study your Faith – You cannot love what you do not know.
- 2. Live your Faith – Do God’s will and Pray Daily
- 3. Avoid all Sin – Fr. Lasance – “Yes, it is vice, evil, . . . which deprives men of their faith.”
- 4. Be on Your Guard against Doubts and Doubters (2 Timothy 4:3-4)

Episode #3: The Helmet of Hope

I. Introduction

1. Ephesians 6:10, 13-18 – Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. . . . take the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the equipment of the gospel of peace; above all taking the shield of faith, with which you can quench all the flaming darts of the evil one. And **take the helmet of salvation**, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Pray at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints
2. Faith: The Pearl of Great Price
3. Christ Conquers and Christ Reigns
 - a. Fr. Lasance – “In front of St. Peter’s in Rome there stands a lofty obelisk which the ancient Romans brought over from Egypt. For centuries it remained buried deep under heaps of rubbish; Pope Sixtus V caused it to be set up once more, and this inscription to be engraved upon it: “*Christus vincit, Christus regnat, Christus imperat; Christus nos ab omni malo liberat.*” “Christ conquers, Christ reigns, Christ governs; Christ delivers us from every evil” (30).
 - b. Christ Conquers in His Glorious Resurrection
 - c. Christ Reigns in the Holy Roman Catholic Church
4. Application: The Necessity of Faith – “Without faith it is impossible to please him [God]. For whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him” (Hebrews 11:6).

II. The Helmet of Hope

1. What is hope?
 - a. Fr. Lasance – “The virtue of hope, must accompany you on your way through life. Like a helmet of steel, this virtue must guard your head against the blows of fate, which are often so hard. It must be your protection” (68).
 - b. Hope is “the theological virtue by which we desire the kingdom of heaven and eternal life as our happiness, placing our trust in Christ’s promises and relying not on our own strength, but on the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit” (CCC 1817). Hope is faith directed toward the future.
 - c. The theological virtue of hope is a virtue that perfects the will, the rational appetite. It is a virtue of the will because it stretches toward a good that reason proposes to it. It is a theological virtue because the good that reason proposes is God himself. It is called hope because it is still focused on a future good, union with God, which is arduous and difficult, but not impossible.

2. Where is God Leading Us?

- a. John 14:2 – In my Father’s house are many rooms; if it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?
- b. Hebrews 13:14 – For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city which is to come.

3. God Watches Over Us – Abandoning Ourselves to God’s Will (Lasance pp. 79-80)

- a. First Principle – “Nothing is done, **nothing happens**, either in the material or in the moral world, **which God has not foreseen from all eternity** and which He has not willed, or at least permitted.”
- b. Second Principle – “**God can will nothing, He can permit nothing**, but in view of the end He proposed to Himself in creating the world; i.e., **in view of His glory and the glory of the Man-God, Jesus Christ, His only Son**.
- c. Third Principle – “As long as man lives upon the earth, God desires to be glorified through the happiness of this privileged creature; and consequently **in God’s designs the interest of man’s sanctification and happiness is inseparable from the interest of the divine glory.**”

III. Application

- 1. Fr. Lasance – “If nothing but what He permits happens, and if He can permit nothing but what is for our happiness, then we have nothing to fear, except not being sufficiently submissive to God” (80).
- 2. Colossians 3:1-3 – If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

Episode #4: The Arrow of the Love of God

I. Introduction

1. Fr. Lasance – “It is of the highest importance for every man, and especially for the young man, that an active, practical, abiding, unswerving love of God should dwell within his heart – of the highest importance for the young man, since it is in youth that the war against the threefold enemy – the devil, the world, and the concupiscence of the flesh – is the fiercest and most decisive” (101).
2. The Shield of Faith – Jesus is the Pearl of Great Price, He conquers, and He reigns.
3. The Helmet of Hope – “The virtue of hope, must accompany you on your way through life. Like a helmet of steel, this virtue must guard your head against the blows of fate, which are often so hard. It must be your protection” (Lasance, 68).
4. 1 Corinthians 13:13 – “So faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love” (1 Corinthians 13:13).

II. The Arrow of the Love of God

1. What is love?
 - a. Love for something requires two factors: To will (desire) the good of the beloved. To will (desire) to be in union with the beloved.
 - b. Reginald Garrigou-Lagrangé – “Love ought to be the principle of every human life” (*Knowing the Love of God*, 43).
2. Friendship with God – “No longer do I call you servants, but I have called you friends” (Jn. 15:15).
 - a. The Problem: “Friendship presupposes that a person who is loved is seen. Furthermore, it demands a certain quality, a certain common life, the reciprocal revealing of one’s most intimate thoughts and the possibility of one doing good for the other” (Garrigou-Lagrangé, 44).
 - b. The Solution: “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16).
3. The Love of God for Us
 - a. God’s Love is Excessive
 - i. We love as a response or an effect of our beloved’s goodness. God’s love is the cause of his beloved’s goodness. “The charity of God for us is a love essentially active and effective” (Garrigou-Lagrangé, 45).
 - ii. Garrigou-Lagrangé – “God has no need of us. He was infinitely happy without us because He Himself is the infinite good. He created us through pure benevolent love and through pure love He gives us at every moment all that is necessary for our physical, intellectual, and moral life” (45).

b. God's Love is Foolish

- i. "For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. . . . For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, . . . the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men" (1 Cor. 1:18, 22-23, 25).
- ii. Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange – "It was not sufficient [for Christ] to shed His blood for us; He wished to give us His body for food, He wished to be eaten by us that He might be able to transform and assimilate us still more to Himself. Such is the excess of God's love for us, but this love demands a response" (48).

III. Application

1. Matthew 7:21 – Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.
2. Fr. Lasance – "Strive to free your heart from all mere earthly or sinful affection. Lift up your heart to heaven! There alone is an object truly worthy of your love!" (99).
3. St. Augustine – "Love, and do what you wish." If you really love, what you do will be good.

Episode #5: The Lance of the Fear of God

I. Introduction

1. Fr. Lasance – “All Christians, but in the first place all men, both old and young, must show themselves to be the courageous apostles of Christ, must fearlessly espouse His cause before all the world, and in every position of life. That is a high, a glorious vocation, calculated to fire every youthful heart with enthusiasm” (122-123).
2. Summary
 - a. **The Shield of Faith** – Jesus is The Pearl of Great Price
 - b. **The Helmet of Hope** – “The virtue of hope, must accompany you on your way through life. Like a helmet of steel, this virtue must guard your head against the blows of fate, which are often so hard. It must be your protection” (Lasance, 68).
 - c. **The Arrow of the Love of God** – God’s Love is Excessive and Foolish
3. Application
 - a. Matthew 7:21 – Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.
 - b. Fr. Lasance – “Strive to free your heart from all mere earthly or sinful affection. Lift up your heart to heaven! There alone is an object truly worthy of your love!” (99).

II. The Fear of the Lord – “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom” (Proverbs 9:10).

1. Fr. Lasance – “If you wish to save your soul, fear the Lord; if it is your heart’s desire to dedicate your youth to God, fear the Lord” (114).
2. “The gift of fear perfects the virtues of hope and temperance. It perfects the former by inspiring us with a fear of displeasing God and of being separated from Him. It perfects the latter by detaching us from the pleasures that could bring about that separation” (Tanqueray, 1335).
3. “The gift of fear is a supernatural habit by which the just soul, under the instinct of the Holy Spirit, acquires a special docility for subjecting itself completely to the divine will out of reverence for the excellency and majesty of God” (Aumann, 262).

III. Four Types of Fear

1. St. Thomas Aquinas – “We are speaking of fear now, in so far as it makes us turn, so to speak, to God or away from Him. For, since the object of fear is an evil, sometimes, on account of the evils he fears, man withdraws from God, and this is called **human fear**; while sometimes, on account of the evils he fears, he turns to God and adheres to Him. This latter evil is twofold, viz. evil of punishment, and evil of fault. Accordingly, if a man turns to God and adheres to Him, through fear of punishment, it will be **servile fear**; but if it be on account of fear of committing a fault, it will be **filial fear**, for it becomes a child to fear offending its father. If, however, it be on account of both, it will be **initial fear**, which is between both these fears.” (ST II-II, q. 19, a. 2).

2. Worldly Fear – This type of fear motivates us to abandon God because we hear what other people will think or say, or because we fear the loss of some sin we are attached to.
3. Servile Fear – This type of fear motivates us to serve God, obey his will, and avoid sin in order to avoid temporal or eternal punishment. This is a good type of fear, though it is imperfect or incomplete.
4. Filial Fear – This type of fear motivates us to serve God, obey his will, and avoid sin because sins are offensive to God and he fears being separated from God. This type of fear is good and perfect.
5. Initial Fear – This type of fear occupies a middle ground between servile and filial fear. It flees sin because it offends God, but mixed with this is a certain fear of punishment.

III. Application

1. Mark 8:36 – For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his life?
2. First, we need to stop worrying about offending men with our devotion to God; worldly fear needs to be overcome. “Human respect is a cancer which eats into modern society and does incalculable harm, especially to young men” (Lasance, 126).
3. Second, servile fear is a good start, but we need filial fear of God. We should avoid sin because we love God, and we don’t want to lose our relationship with him, not because we’ll be punished.

Episode #6: The Sword of Respect for Authority

I. Introduction

1. Fr. Lasance – “Obedience, respect for authority, is for all men a most necessary virtue, and for the very young man more especially; for obedience is order and order must exist wherever God rules and reigns. Disobedience, the offspring of pride, kindled the flames of hell, and peoples its awful realms” (131).
2. Summary
 - a. **The Shield of Faith** – Jesus is The Pearl of Great Price
 - b. **The Helmet of Hope** – “The virtue of hope, must accompany you on your way through life. Like a helmet of steel, this virtue must guard your head against the blows of fate, which are often so hard. It must be your protection” (Lasance, 68).
 - c. **The Arrow of the Love of God** – God’s Love is Excessive and Foolish
 - d. **The Fear of the Lord** – “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom” (Proverbs 9:10).
3. Four Types of Fear
 - a. Worldly Fear motivates us to abandon God.
 - b. Servile Fear motivates us to serve God in order to avoid punishment.
 - c. Filial Fear motivates us to serve God because we fear being separated from God.
 - d. Initial Fear occupies a middle ground between servile and filial fear.
4. Application – For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? (Mark 8:36)
 - a. First, we need to stop worrying about offending men with our devotion to God; worldly fear needs to be overcome.
 - b. Second, servile fear is a good start, but we need filial fear of God. We should avoid sin because we love God, and we don’t want to lose our relationship with him.

II. The Sword of Respect for Authority

1. Respect for the Family – The 4th Commandment
 - a. “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land which the Lord your God gives you” (Ex. 20:12; Deut. 5:16).
 - b. Jesus was obedient to his parents (Lk. 2:51), and he himself recalled the force of this "commandment of God" (Mk. 7:8-13).

- c. Fr. Lasance – “Honor your father and mother; honor them by invariably speaking in a respectful manner to them and of them; by never allowing an insolent or unbecoming expression to pass your lips in regard to them” (134).

2. Respect for the Government

- a. According to Aristotelian-Thomistic philosophy, man is naturally social and is led to form societies by the dictate of natural law operating through his rational nature.
- b. Fr. Lasance – “True patriotism and love of religion go hand in hand” (161).

3. Respect for the Church – Fr. Lasance

- a. “As a good Catholic, true to your convictions, you will never speak in a disrespectful manner of the Church, her doctrines, her services, her ceremonies, or her priests” (143-144).
- b. “You must also love the Church, and rejoice in her prosperity and promote her interests as far as it lies in your power to do so” (144).
- c. “You must, before all things, give proof of the respect and love you feel for the Church by carefully obeying her commands and conforming to her decrees” (144).

III. Application – Concerning Self-Deception

- 1. “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven (Matthew 7:21).
- 2. Fr. Lasance – “If you are a truly good Catholic, you will and must give honor and pleasure to your mother the Church by your good conduct – by an upright life” (145).

Episode #7: The Breastplate of Justice

I. Introduction

1. Fr. Lasance – “The mistake into which most young people fall, is that they make the journey to eternity in so thoughtless a fashion . . . The true Christian also has his temptations; he has to fight with his own concupiscences, with the world, with the devil. But he is not careless and thoughtless; on the contrary, he is watchful and serious; in prayer he meditates upon religious truths and by the grace of God his faith becomes fervent and lively, so that he does not fall into grievous sin, but makes steady progress in the way of perfection” (183-184).
2. Summary
 - a. The Shield of Faith
 - b. The Helmet of Hope
 - c. The Arrow of the Love of God
 - d. The Fear of the Lord
 - e. The Sword of Respect for Authority
3. Three Levels of Authority
 - a. Respect for the Family
 - b. Respect for the Government
 - c. Respect for the Church
4. Application – Concerning Self-Deception
 - a. “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven (Matthew 7:21).
 - b. Fr. Lasance – “If you are a truly good Catholic, you will and must give honor and pleasure to your mother the Church by your good conduct” (145).

II. The Breastplate of Justice

1. What is justice?
 - a. Justice is the virtue that perfects the will. “As a virtue, it is the constant and permanent determination to give everyone his or her rightful due” (Fr. John Hardon's *Modern Catholic Dictionary*).

- b. According to St. Thomas Aquinas, “**commutative justice**, which is concerned about the mutual dealings between two persons. [and] . . . **distributive justice**, which distributes common goods proportionately (ST II-II, q. 61, a. 1).
- 2. The Virtue of Religion – According to St. Thomas Aquinas, the virtue of religion does not focus solely on worshipping and serving God, as it also directs all of our actions toward God for his glory, making our entire life religious.
 - a. Fr. Lasance – “Two great camps: the men who render to God the things that are God’s, and those who take from God the things that rightly belong to Him, that is to say, who do not perform their religious duties” (169).
 - b. What do we owe God?
 - i. Go to Confession and Mass
 - ii. Study the Word of God
 - iii. Prayer – “Prayer is assuredly the ladder to heaven, without which it is not possible to be saved . . . Pray, pray always; if you pray, you will certainly save your souls; if you do not pray, you will certainly lose them” (173, 175).

III. Application

- 1. Fr. Lasance – “Raise your heart to God, raise it frequently to him every morning and evening at least! Raise your heart to God in the morning, by making a firm resolution to avoid this or that besetting sin and to overcome your predominant passion. Raise it to God in the evening, by repenting of your sins, by meditating on death, judgment, heaven, and hell, and by resolving to lead a more holy, a more virtuous life. Pray every night for the grace of perseverance” (187).
- 2. Start a morning and evening prayer routine.

Episode #8: The Girdle of Self-Control

I. Introduction

1. Fr. Lasance – “Without continual conquest of self, without constant self-denial, no other virtue, no true happiness, can be attained. . . You must take it upon yourself day by day the cross of self-denial, of renunciation, not only in order to live an upright life, but also in order to be happy” (229).
2. Summary
 - a. The Shield of Faith
 - b. The Helmet of Hope
 - c. The Arrow of the Love of God
 - d. The Fear of the Lord
 - e. The Sword of Respect for Authority
 - f. The Breastplate of Justice
3. The Virtue of Religion: What do we owe God?
 - a. Go to Confession and Mass
 - b. Study the Word of God
 - c. Prayer
4. Application
 - a. Fr. Lasance – “Raise your heart to God in the morning, by making a firm resolution to avoid this or that besetting sin and . . . Raise it to God in the evening, by repenting of your sins, . . . [and] by resolving to lead a more holy, a more virtuous life” (187).
 - b. Start a morning and evening prayer routine.

II. The Girdle of Self-Control

1. Matthew 16:24-26 – Then Jesus told his disciples, “If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man, if he gains the whole world and forfeits his life? Or what shall a man give in return for his life?”
2. “Take the cross which the Lord has destined for you; desire no other, and learn to bear it in your youth, for then it will gradually appear to you to be light and sweet” (Lasance, 234).

3. Lasance – “Wherein are you to deny yourself, what are you to renounce? . . . You are to renounce whatever is forbidden; you must refuse it, and hold yourself entirely aloof from it” (227). Three Things to Consider:
 - a. Renounce the love pleasure.
 - b. Renounce the lust of the flesh.
 - c. Renounce the insatiable greed of money

III. Application

1. St. Bernard of Clairvaux – “Christian warriors, He who gave His life for you, today demands yours in return. Abandon then the things that perish, to gather unfading palms and conquer a Kingdom that has no end.”
2. St. Joseph Society
 - a. Our mission is to help men “To Order All Things to Christ.”
 - b. A Commitment to Asceticism: As an act of religious devotion, a man of the St. Joseph Society devotes himself wholeheartedly to living a life of virtue and holiness as an offering to Christ our Lord.