

MAXIMS OF ST. PHILIP NERI

FOR CONQUERING *LUST*, THE GRAMMAR OF THE REVOLUTION.

- Devotion to the Blessed Virgin is actually necessary, because there is no better means of obtaining God's graces than through His most holy Mother.
- In order to preserve their purity, young men should frequent the Sacraments, especially confession, go to sermons, and be often reading the Lives of Saints.
- He who conceals a grave sin in confession, is completely in the devil's hands.
- There is nothing more to the purpose for exciting a spirit of prayer, than the reading of spiritual books.
- We ought to fear and fly temptations of the flesh, even in sickness, and in old age itself, aye, and so long as we can open and shut our eyelids, for the spirit of incontinence gives no truce either to place, time, or person.
- The stench of impurity before God and the angels is so great, that no stench in the world can equal it.
- Humility is the true guardian of chastity.
- We must never trust ourselves, for it is the devil's way first to get us to feel secure, and then to make us fall.
- If young men would preserve their purity, let them avoid bad company.
- Without mortification nothing can be done.
- Let them also avoid nourishing their bodies delicately.
- Young men should be very careful to avoid idleness.
- If young men wish to protect themselves from all danger of impurity, let them never retire to their own rooms immediately after dinner, either to read or write, or do anything else; but let them remain in conversation, because at that time the devil is wont to assault us with more than usual vehemence, and this is that demon which is called in Scripture the noonday demon, and from which holy David prayed to be delivered.
- When a man is in an occasion of sin, let him look what he is doing, get out of the occasion, and avoid the sin.
- An excellent method of preserving ourselves from relapsing into serious faults, is to say every evening, "To-morrow I may be dead."
- Let a man always think that he has God before his eyes.
- Men should often renew their good resolutions, and not lose heart because they are tempted against them.
- One of the most efficacious means of keeping ourselves chaste, is to have compassion for those who fall through their frailty, and never to boast in the least of being free, but with all humility to acknowledge that whatever we have is from the mercy of God.
- To be without pity for other men's falls, is an evident sign that we shall fall ourselves shortly.
- In the matter of purity there is no greater danger than the not fearing the danger: when a man does not distrust himself, and is without fear, it is all over with him.
- As soon as a man feels that he is tempted, he should fly to God, and devoutly utter that prayer which the fathers of the desert so much esteemed: "O God come to my assistance, Lord make haste to help me" or that verse, "create a clean heart in me, O God."
- When sensual thoughts come into the mind, we ought immediately to make use of our minds, and fix them instantaneously upon something or other, no matter what.
- In temptations of the flesh, a Christian ought to have immediate recourse to God, make the sign of the cross over his heart three times, and say, "Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me."
- In the warfare of the flesh, only cowards gain the victory; that is to say, those who fly.
- We should be less alarmed for one who is tempted in the flesh, and who resists by avoiding the occasions, than for one who is not tempted and is not careful to avoid the occasions.
- When a person puts himself in an occasion of sin, saying, "I shall not fall, I shall not commit it," it is an almost infallible sign that he will fall, and with all the greater damage to his soul.
- Let us always go to confession with sincerity, and take this as our rule - Never out of human respect to conceal anything from our confessor, however inconsiderable it may be.
- In trying to get rid of bad habits, it is of the greatest importance not to put off going to confession after a fall, and also to keep to the same confessor.
- When we go to confession, we should accuse ourselves of our worst sins first, and of those things which we are most ashamed of, because by this means we put the devil to greater confusion, and reap more fruit from our confession.
- At Communion we ought to ask for the remedy of the vice to which we feel ourselves most inclined.
- In order to begin well, and to finish better, it is quite necessary to hear mass every day, unless there be some lawful hindrance in the way.
- We must not trust in ourselves, but take the advice of our spiritual father, and recommend ourselves to everybody's prayers.
- Let us strive after purity of heart, for the Holy Ghost dwells in candid and simple minds.
- The Lord grants in a moment what we may have been unable to obtain in dozens of years.
- We must pray incessantly for the gift of perseverance.
- Human language cannot express the beauty of a soul which dies in a state of grace.
- To obtain the protection of our Blessed Lady in our most urgent wants, it is very useful to say sixty-three times, after the fashion of a Rosary, "Virgin Mary, Mother of God, pray to Jesus for me." *