

“The person who is fully determined to make a half hours meditation every morning, cost what it may, has already travelled half his journey in the spiritual life. Without mental prayer the day will almost unavoidably be a lukewarm one.”
St. Teresa of Avila

"I have many distractions (in prayer), but as soon as I am aware of them, I pray for those people the thought of whom is diverting my attention. In this way, they reap the benefit of my distractions."
St. Therese of Lisieux

“The way of perfection passes by way of the Cross. **There is no holiness without renunciation and spiritual battle.** Spiritual progress entails the ascesis and mortification that gradually lead to living in the peace and joy of the Beatitudes”
Catechism of the Catholic Church #2015



Saintly Advice on Prayer and Mortification

'If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross, and follow me.'
(Matthew 16: 24)

“Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.”
(Galatians 5:24)

“It is right, too, to seek example and inspiration from the great saints of the Church. Pure as they were, they inflicted such mortifications upon themselves as to leave us almost aghast with admiration. And as we contemplate their saintly heroism, shall not we be moved by God’s grace to impose on ourselves some voluntary sufferings and deprivations, we whose consciences are perhaps weighed down by so heavy a burden of guilt?”

Pope St. John XXIII: Encyclical Letter: Paenitentiam Agere – On the need for the practice of interior and exterior penance

“How many deceive themselves in thinking sanctity consists in the holy follies of the saints! How many look upon holiness as something beyond their reach or capability, and think that it is to be found only in the performance of extraordinary actions. Satisfied that they have not the strength for great austerities, the time for much prayer, or the courage for painful humiliations, they silence their conscience with the thought that great sanctity is not for them, that they have not been called to be saints. With their eyes fixed on the heroic deeds of the few, they miss the daily little sacrifices God asks them to make; and while waiting for something great to prove their love, they lose the countless little opportunities of sanctification each day bears with it in its bosom.”

Fr. Willie Doyle SJ

“If (in your meditation) the heart wanders or is distracted, bring it back to the point quite gently and replace it tenderly in its Master’s presence. And even if you did nothing during the whole of your hour but bring your heart back and place it again in Our Lord’s presence, though it went away every time you brought it back, your hour would be very well employed.”

Saint Francis de Sales

“Never give up prayer, and should you find dryness and difficulty, persevere in it for this very reason. God often desires to see what love your soul has, and love is not tried by ease and satisfaction.”

Saint John of the Cross

“In vocal prayer we go to God on foot. In meditation we go to God on horseback. In contemplation we go to God in a jet.”

Archbishop Fulton Sheen

“Every one of us needs a half an hour of prayer each day, except when we are busy – then we need an hour.”

Saint Francis de Sales

“The Lord delights in every little step you take.”

Saint Francis de Sales

“To begin is for everyone. To persevere is for saints.”

St. Jose María Escrivá

“The harm that comes to souls from the lack of reading holy books makes me shudder... What power spiritual reading has to lead to a change of course, and to make even worldly people enter into the way of perfection.”

Saint Padre Pio

“Your mortifications should not mortify others.”

St. Jose Maria Escriva

”Where there is no great mortification there is no great sanctity.”

St. Philip Neri

“Oh, how I like those little mortifications that are seen by nobody, such as rising a quarter of an hour sooner, rising for a little while in the night to pray!”

St. Jean Marie Vianney

"There are plenty of ways to practice mortification! Just patiently endure cold, heat, sickness, troubles, people, happenings, and so forth."

St. John Bosco

"When your hour is particularly difficult, rejoice all the more; your love will be greater for its suffering more. It is a privileged hour that will count for two."

St. Peter Julian Eymard

"Our Lord wants me to give Him all I can give cheerfully, not repining or regretting any sacrifice; not saying, ‘I wish I had not to do this or suffer this cold or pain, etc’, but rather, ‘I wish I could do more for You Jesus, I wish it were colder’. "

Fr. Willie Doyle SJ

“Fight always, even though you don’t feel like it, even though your mood may be different. Remember what St Therese said: “Where would our merit be if we only fought when we felt like it”.

Venerable Tomás Morales SJ

'Let us read the lives of the saints; let us consider the penances which they performed, and blush to be so unmanly and so fearful of mortifying our flesh.'

St. Alphonsus