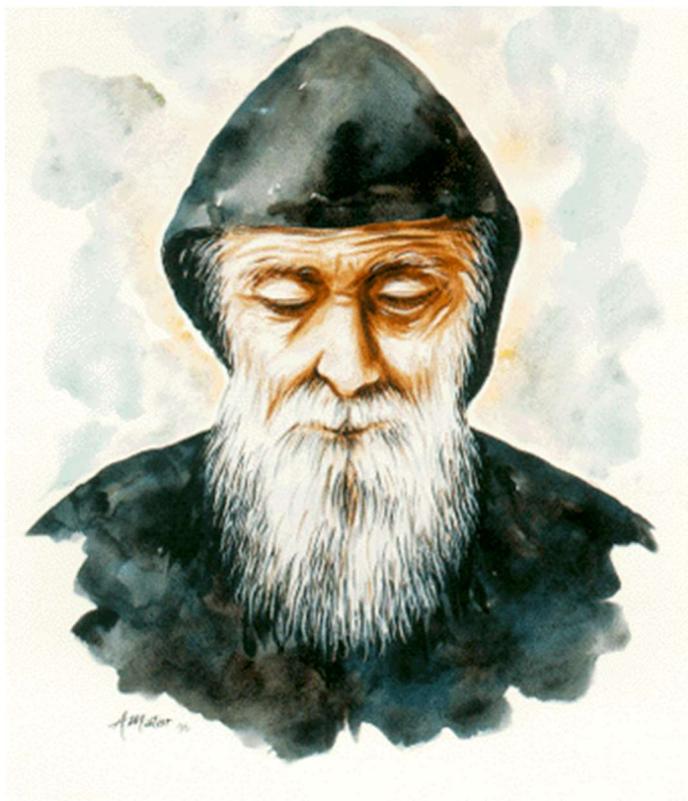


Words of Saint Charbel



Contents

1. Christ is the Truth of Love Incarnate.....	- 3 -
2- And you will achieve the Objective for.....	- 4 -
which God Created You	- 4 -
3- Your Work in this World.....	- 7 -
4- Your Weakness is there for you to overcome	- 10 -
5- Axis of the Universe.....	- 12 -
6- Your Journey in this World is the trip of your Sanctity	- 13 -
7- Christ is the Foundation of God’s Building	- 16 -
8- Sanctity is Your Goal	- 18 -
9- Your Future is the First Day in the Next World.....	- 20 -
10- Do Good Untiringly.....	- 22 -
11- Walk the Path of Sanctity in the Joy of the Resurrection.....	- 25 -
12- Sanctity is not a Chance, Sanctity is a Choice	- 27 -
13- Love is a Light that Shines	- 28 -
14-Confess your Sins and you will kill the Evil that’s in you.....	- 29 -
15- Motion and Life.....	- 31 -
16- Every Family is a Holy Family	- 32 -
-From the five messages remaining from St. Sharbel's Words.....	- 33 -

1. Christ is the Truth of Love Incarnate

Before the beginning, was love. Everything came to be through love, and without love, nothing of what has existed since the beginning, or is now, or will be forever, would have come to be. In the very beginning was love; the basis of the universe - its law and regulations - is love. When all ends, only love will remain; all that is outside love will pass.

God is love. God is truth. God is the true love. The world of God is the world of love; it is the world of truth, and there is no truth outside love. Man is not fulfilled except through love, and he does not reach the truth except in the world of God. Man belongs to God; he is the child of love, the child of God, and his real home is the world of God.

There is a way to God's world, and that way is Christ. Christ is the truth of love incarnate. He is the proclamation of the truth of life, and He is the way to God's world. Every man, during his journey through this world to the other, is called to follow this way. And, as in every journey in this world, a man must take along provisions and weapons in his journey to the other world. The only provision for this journey is love, and the only weapon is love. This love can only be encompassing of all human beings, can expect nothing in return, can know no boundaries, and be only unconditional. That is how God loves you, so love each other with the same love, with God's love.

One cannot give this love from oneself, but can get it from God, through Jesus Christ, to be filled with it, in spirit. This is achieved through prayer. Only through prayer can love be obtained from God the Father, the source of love, through God the Son, Jesus Christ -Love I ncarname - and this love is the Spirit of God in man. Pray to obtain this love, to love all human beings without recompense, without boundaries, without conditions, as God loves, **and then you will become Children of God. Man came from the heart of God, and will return to God's heart.**

2- And you will achieve the Objective for which God Created You

Why are people going downward, whereas the road to God is upward?!

People are carrying many loads and burdens that are causing their backs to bend; their foreheads are touching the ground, and they are no longer able to stand upright and raise their heads to see the face of their Lord. They are trying to free themselves and each other of these burdens; they throw them on each other and make each other carry them, making their loads heavier.

Only Jesus Christ is able to free all human beings of all their loads, burdens and weights, for a slave cannot set another slave free. Man is born bound with ropes and chains, and shackled in bonds within which he is reared and lives, and very many are those who die in them.

People are getting used to these bonds which are becoming part of them, thus making it difficult to save them from them. The glittering of their bonds is dazzling them so that they can no longer see the face of the Lord, and the rattling of their chains is deafening them so that they can no longer hear the voice of the Lord. They boast of the glitter of their bonds, which hobble them, and delight in the tinkling of the chains which bind them; shackles remain shackles no matter how they shine, and the chain that binds you remains a chain of bondage even if it is of gold. Instead of polishing your shackles, shatter them, and instead of composing music from the tinkling of your chains, untie and break free of all of them.

The Lord is in pain seeing as shackled slaves looking for happiness in places in which they will not find it, the people for whom He became man to set free, and for whom he died and rose from the dead to give life and eternal happiness.

- Your happiness in this world is not from this world. If you were from this world, you would stay in it.

- Your happiness is not in stones. Stones do not give happiness: Why does man seek after gold? Is it to give value to himself? Man is far dearer than gold, man is the child of God; his value is intrinsic. Gold does not set man free of his shackles, but only makes them shine more.

- Your happiness is not found in other humans either, for they cannot offer happiness as they do not own it, and no one can give something one does not own.

Only Jesus Christ can give you true happiness. People, however, have become arrogant, living amidst asphalt and cement, their minds have become asphalt and their hearts cement. Their minds produce only dark and gloomy thoughts, and their hearts are hardened, cruel and devoid of love. People have become matter that moves without spirit, and some of them are mobile rocks spreading the stench of sin. People have become arrogant and they insist on finding happiness in sin. Sin only gives them anxiety, sadness, misery and emptiness. People have become arrogant; they boast to themselves, they boast to others and they boast to God. Are they not aware that God can turn them back into dust at the speed of lightning?

But the love of our Lord is great. Our Lord loves humans greatly because they are His children, and He has made of them a light to the world.

Every person is a torch of light; our Lord created him to illumine the world. Every person is a lamp made by our Lord to shine and give light. Whoever gets a lamp, receives it to illuminate the darkness. The lamp was made to illumine the darkness. But these lamps are preoccupied with their outer frame: they are coloring their lampshades, painting them, decorating them and embellishing them. These shades that our Lord had made thin and transparent to protect the light, have become thick and hard, and they are blocking the light, and so the world has become immersed in darkness. These lamps that our Lord had made to carry the light, and illumine the world, have become works of art that are decorated, embellished and colored but unable to give light. What is the use of a lamp that cannot light the dark? A lamp cannot be seen in darkness unless it lights up. No matter how beautiful a lamp is, its light is more beautiful than it. The world is drowning in darkness and this while you are the light of the world. Your glass should regain its thinness and transparency so that you may **light up the world, and achieve the objective for which God has created you.**

God made every creature to fulfill the purpose of its existence. Observe the creatures of this earth; each one is performing its duty with

utmost precision and integrity, and no creature is miserable. The most miserable creature on the face of the earth is happier than the sinner. **At the day of reckoning, the sinner will not so much worry about the harsh reckoning as much as he will feel ashamed before the greatness of God's love,** that love which created the universe and gave life. Love is the only treasure that you amass in this world, and which remains with you through to the next world.

All your treasures, money, glories and achievements that you think you have owned in this world and believe are yours, will remain in this world; even your own bones are not yours. **Only love will go with you to the next world, and whoever gets to stand before the Lord devoid of love will die of shame,** and that will be the moment of his real death, not when he departed from this world.

Man dies if he does not turn into love, for God is love, and only love is eternal. Let love reign over your hearts and humility guide your minds. Pray and repent. Pray to Jesus Christ and He will hear you; open your hearts to Him, He will enter them and peace will come into them. But pray with all your heart. Do not mumble words that come from your lips while your hearts are with another lord. Our Lord knows what is in your hearts and He wants your hearts.

Do not tire yourselves looking for the truth outside of Christ. There is no truth outside of Christ. Christ is the truth, and when you know Christ you will know the truth and become free; and Christ wants you free. Do not be afraid, be strong and be sure and confident that Christ has defeated the world.

3- Your Work in this World

Christ is the way; remain firm in Christ and follow the way, and do not let anything move you away from Him.

Stop by every brother of yours even for a very brief moment, point the way out to him, point the light out to him: should he choose to walk by your side, then let him go before you, and should he ask you to hold his hand, then hold both his hands; should he try to move you away from the way, or push you back, then let go of him, for the road is long and the work is plentiful: your work is to sow the earth with prayer and incense. Sow the earth with love. Sow in the rock because crops will grow in every rock that has a grain of earth. Crush the rock that needs crushing. Keep striking at the rock and never weary, for if it does not break after the first and second strikes, it will break after a hundred strikes. Do not weary and fall behind because if you do, someone else will crush the rock, plow and sow; one sows in season and reaps in season.

Strike at the rock and do not be afraid because the arm is yours but the land is not yours nor the sledgehammer is yours. Do not nag, grumble, fidget and complain: the wheat spikes undergoing threshing to separate hay from them do not grumble under the weight of the thresher, and because of the harshness of the threshing floor, for they are being prepared to become bread and nourishment. And the grapes do not fidget while being pressed, squeezed and crushed on the rocks of the press, for they become wine and joy. Without the cross there is neither bread nor wine. Whoever wants to become bread and wine must carry the cross. Carry the cross and go toward the light. In this world, man is moving from the shore of darkness and nonexistence to the shore of eternal light, and he passes through the seas of this world in a ship, and the ships of this world are many:

1-Some ships are very beautiful, very luxurious, and also very comfortable, because their sails incline to the wind, and their rudders sway with the waves. They face up neither to the winds nor to the waves. They have neither direction, nor destination to reach. Most people rush to embark upon these ships because they see nothing in this world except the journey, and all they want is their trip to be pleasant and their travel to be comfortable. But no journey in this sea lasts forever; the trip ends and the passengers of these ships end up at the bottom of the sea, near the shore from whence they had departed.

2- Another type of ships has thin sails and weak wood; these ships are wrecked as soon as they are on the high seas, where waves rise high and storms gain strength, and the passengers of these ships end up somewhere at the bottom of the deep sea.

3- A third type includes ships that have strong wood, solid sails, and that look nice and inviting. But its captain is an impostor who takes the passengers from one shore of death to another. And so the passengers of these ships end up on some death shore from whence the return is impossible.

4- There is the Lord's ship which has strong wood and solid sails, and whose captain is full of wisdom, courage and love. This ship sails across the deep seas, faces up strong storms and winds, and plows the high waves in the open sea: **The journey in this ship is rough, but its arrival is sure.**

Hang on to the Lord's ship; do not be afraid of the storms and high waves. Do not let the luxurious and comfortable ships lure you into boarding them because they do not arrive. Be concerned more about arriving than about the journey. Do not let the depths of the sea fascinate you and draw you to dive into them. The sea of this world is for you to sail upon rather than to dive into. You cannot be at the same time on board the ship, and deep in the sea water, or in two ships at the same time.

Hang on to the Lord's ship and help your brothers hang on with you: At every port you reach, invite people to join you in your journey so you may share the arrival with them; tell them about your ship and Captain and about the shore of light. But, rest assured that **it is not what you say that will make people embark on the Lord's ship, but rather it is your love for each other and your love for the Captain and your trust and your belief in Him, and the joy on your faces.**

Rest assured also that the journey on this ship will only end on the shore of light in order to continue with the light, because man is a cosmic creature whose limits are the light and not an earthly creature whose limits are earth and water. Man is dust and light: Whoever lives in the dust returns to the dust and dies in the dust, and whoever lives in light, returns to light and lives in light. Do not let earth confine you, because the boundaries of your homeland in this world are the end of the sea and

the beginning of heaven. Do not let earth enslave you; be free, freedom can only be in freedom from sin; if you are free from sin, then you are free and nobody can enslave you. But if you are a slave to sin, then you are a slave even if you hold the king's scepter in your hand.

Keep the grace of love and the mark of humility. Be true witnesses of Jesus Christ. Confront evil with love, but do not use love as an excuse to avoid confronting evil; a farmer does not use rubble as an excuse to stop plowing. Do not be afraid, evil will destroy itself.

Fully commit yourselves to the Church and all her teachings, and unwearily persevere in prayer. Honor our mother the Virgin Mary, and arm yourselves with the Rosary, because the name of the Virgin Mary drives away darkness and crushes evil. Be monks in the heart of this world, even if without the habit. Sow the earth with prayer and incense. Be saints and sanctify the earth. The road of sanctity is long, but be sure that when the thoughts of God are in your minds and the love of God is in your hearts, then the strength of God will be in your arms and you will arrive. Rest assured also that whenever you are praying, I will be praying with you so that you may be sanctified and the name of the Lord be glorified.

4- Your Weakness is there for you to overcome

Every padlock has a key, and every door has a lock that can be opened only by its key. Death has closed Heaven's door and sin has locked it. The Cross is the key that undoes the padlock of sin, trips the lock of death and opens Heaven's door. **The Cross is the key to Heaven's door;** there is no other key.

Heaven's door is where Heaven and earth meet, at the summit of Golgotha. This door is clear, tangible and visible, and every man with eyes can see it. Some think that it has no lock and opens to whoever pushes it. But when you approach the door, you will realize that it has a lock and it can only be opened with its proper key.

The true key cannot be recognized unless you put it into the padlock. There is only one true key: the Cross of Christ. Do not weary yourselves searching for keys aside from this Cross that opens the door of Heaven, and do not in vain make another key. Many are the people who waste their lives in designing their own keys; they cast and strike keys reflecting their own designs, believing that these keys will open the door for them. Many are the people who mock the Cross of Christ. But at Heaven's door, the truth will be revealed and all other keys will fail.

All the journey of your life is a trip toward this door; at the end of this trip, you either have the key and you will open, or you will stand there holding keys on which you have wasted your life, and which now have failed and disappointed you. Take up the Cross of Christ, and you will hold the key of Heaven's door.

Take up the Cross of Christ with joy, determination, and courage, do not heed the mockers, do not stop and cry with the wailing, and do not lament when you fall along with the lamenting. Neither weeping and lamenting make the history of salvation, nor does beating on the chest and wailing open Heaven's door. The history of salvation is made through tears of true repentance. One tear of repentance opens the door of Heaven. The tear of repentance will roll down only on the cheek of the courageous faithful.

Take up the Cross of Christ and walk in His footsteps, then the Blessed Virgin will be by yours as she was by His side; and every time you are wounded, say: With the wounds of Christ! Every time you suffer

pain, say: With Your passion, O Jesus! And every time you are persecuted, contemned and insulted, say: For Your glory, O Lord!

Your Weakness is there for you to overcome and not to use as an excuse. When you take up the Cross of Christ, neither pain will bend you, nor will fatigue crush you, and you will walk with firmness, patience and silence. When you arrive at the door, the joy of your crossing over its threshold will exceed by far your pain and the exhaustion of your trip and the happiness of your arrival will exceed by far the suffering of your journey.

Your way to Golgotha is very long in this point of the world, and the Cross of Christ in the East is upon your shoulders; you have many enemies because they are the enemies of the Cross. Do not make them your enemies. Speak to them always in the language of the Cross, even though they are your enemies because of it. The coming months and years will be very difficult, hard, bitter, and as heavy as the Cross. Endure them with deep prayer from faith, with patience from hope, and with love from the Cross. Violence will fill the earth, the planet will be wounded by the knives of ignorance and hatred; all the peoples around you will stagger under the pain, fear will be over the whole Earth like a wind, and sadness in the hearts of all people. Ignorant and hate-filled people will control the destiny of their peoples and lead them to misery and death through blind hatred which they will call justice, and through dark ignorance which they will call faith. Hatred and ignorance will prevail throughout the world. But you, remain firm in faith and love.

The face of the earth will be changed; you retain the face of Christ. Borders, communities and human systems will be wiped out and written anew, and peoples will falter under fire and steel. **Let your love be without boundaries, your community be the Church and your rule the Gospel. Be the anchor that guides the ships straying in the raging seas, and let your hearts be harbors of peace for those lost, homeless, and seeking help. Through your prayers you will invoke mercy, and shower love on earth.** Pray that hardened hearts will be softened, dark minds will open, and calamities and horrors will be reduced. Do not be afraid, in the end the light of Christ will rise, the sign of the Cross will shine, and the Church will radiate light. Remain firm in your faith in Christ and do not be afraid, and trust in the God of the resurrection and life; His glory is ever coming.

5- Axis of the Universe

The whole universe revolves around the mystery of the Cross. Every man thinks that the universe revolves around him and that he is the axis of the universe. The Cross **is** the axis of the universe, and **whoever wants to be on the axis of the universe, will have to be with the crucified on the Cross.** He who does not live the mystery of the Cross cannot comprehend the mystery of the universe: Everyone has a form and entity in time and place, like a piece of ice, and people, in order to preserve their entity, are afraid to draw near fire so they will not melt: What is the use of ice if it keeps its form and entity? If it does not melt and become water it will neither permeate the earth nor water the trees or quench the thirst of people? Do not be afraid to draw near the fire that melts you because it will turn you into life-giving water to irrigate the earth. Let your love be like a fluid permeating all places; do not keep it frozen and give it a form and design it because then it will not pass anywhere.

The salt that does not dissolve will not make salty. Spoiled salt muddies the water that it is supposed to salt, and spoils the food. Good salt that dissolves, disappears in water and does not show in food any form, color or entity, but provides the taste. You are the salt of the earth; if you make your life your own property, it will then be very cheap. The more you give your life, the more its value will increase, and when it reaches its full value it becomes the property of all. The loaf of bread is the same, be it on the table of the rich or that of the poor. A tasty loaf does not ask who is going to eat it when it comes out of the oven; a loaf is meant to be eaten; a good person is a good loaf. The history of mankind is empty without the Cross, because it is a passing history, while the Cross is steady, unchangeable. Your own history will be empty without the Cross, because you are passing and only the crucified gives you life and confirms you in eternal life. It is the Cross that will sanctify you in time.

The beginning of creation, the present time and the end of the world are all occurring, for God, at the present moment. Sanctify through love the present moment of your life; thus you will come to realize the mystery of eternal life in the presence of God. A man is immortal

through love with God. Sanctify time, sanctify your life, sanctify every moment of your life. Do not get distracted by the ticking of the clock: you cannot stop the ticking of the clock, but you can be ready when the clock strikes. **Whoever removes God from his life, mind and heart, will be crushed by time and will drown in death; this does not mean that God no longer exists, but rather that he exists no more.**

As light reveals the existent to the eyes, Christ too reveals existence to the mind and the heart. Without light the human eye is blind to the existent, and without Christ man is blind to existence. God created matter and set order, He also created the mind and instilled the spirit and gave life; just as through logic and analysis, the mind comprehends order and understands matter, so too through faith, prayer and true worship, the spirit realizes the love of God and the mystery of the universe, and gives life.

Some flowers are picked in spring for decoration, other flowers grow old and are left till autumn for seed, while other flowers let their leaves be scattered by the wind to deliver their scent far into the distance and fill the earth with their fragrance. God has wisdom in every movement; pray to understand God's wisdom and live His will, and not to change His will. You Father's will is always your good. Keep wearing the fragrance of oak and thyme, and do not take on the colors of this world and be filled with its odors. The touches of God's fingers upon you are more important than anything the world would dress you up and decorate you. Walk firmly on the road of sanctity, and let Christ live in you. Then you will live in the heart of the mystery of the universe, in the source of light.

6- Your Journey in this World is the trip of your Sanctity

All people were given ears to hear, but those who do hear are few; and of those who hear, those who understand are few, and very few from among those who hear and understand are living what they heard and understood. Those who are heading towards the Kingdom are few and the door is narrow.

Listen, understand and be witnesses. Listen to the voice of the Lord, understand the truth, and witness to the truth that you have perceived and live in it. Be silent so you may hear, and listen to the voice of the Lord.

But be careful not to hear the resounding of the echo of your thoughts and listen to yourself: transcend your own thoughts, and let the word of God purify them, erasing what it erases and writing what it needs to write again.

Man is a part of the whole; the part must listen to the whole. Just, as the drop of water is to the river: a drop of water cannot be a river, even if it contained from everything that's in the river, but the river is all drops of water on the same course. A drop of water in the river is a river, but the drop of water that is outside the river's stream, is drop of water. Listen to the course of the universe, for you are part of it. The whole universe is on a pilgrimage journey towards the heart of the Father, like the journey of the rivers towards the sea. Do not accept being out of this journey. The drop of water outside of the river can never reach the sea.

Listen, understand the truth and let it permeate your spirit. Break all outer layers and break up all accumulations in which the world has wrapped you and which have covered you and blocked off God's face from you. Humble yourself and relinquish the thoughts that blocked off God's voice from you, even if some of them have formed you and made you. Listen with humility and let your heart be soft and your mind free. Listening without humility and repentance is like an echo lost in the valleys: no matter how strong the echo is, the mountain remains a mountain, the valley a valley, and the rock a rock. Listen with humility, understand the truth deeply, and bear witness with courage.

Listen so you may understand and know, and live in accordance with the truth that you have known: it is not enough for you to know the way to arrive, you must walk it.

God will shed light for you on the pages, but it is you who must read; God will light your way, but it is you who must do the walking. Whoever goes up goes up using his feet, and whoever goes down goes down using his feet.

Wherever you arrive, it is your own feet that got you there. Be always in a state of listening and permanent examination of conscience. Redo your calculations every day, change your life and renew it. If you listen with humility you will hear and understand the truth and the truth will set you free. Free yourself from the ropes that bind you: your own thoughts, your personal beliefs and your passions tie you up like the ropes that tie

the boat to the shore. A boat on the shore in a port is held by its ropes which provide it safety but prevent it from sailing. Let the word of God untie your ropes and cut that which needs to be cut, rope after rope, even if you suffer. Do not live inside your own passions and thoughts even if they give you rest and security. **Security is illusion without the peace of Christ, and rest is a deception if it is not in the heart of God.** Do not fear to free yourselves from the shore and to depart from the port. Let God set you free, His word guide you and the Spirit fill your sails. Then you will reach the shore of light. A boat is meant to sail across the sea and not to remain in the port. In order for a boat to sail and reach to the far deep seas, it must untie all its ropes, and if even one rope keeps it tied, then the boat will remain in the port.

Keep only the ropes that tie your sails and guide you, along with the ropes of love and partnership that bind you to your brother in humanity. **Your journey in this world is the trip of your holiness. Holiness is a state of constant transformation from matter into light.**

Pray to listen, pray to understand, and pray to live your faith, apply and bear witness. Pray to be transformed into light. Listen with prayer, understand the truth with prayer, live and bear witness with prayer. Let all your life be prayer and service: if you pray without serving, then you turn the Cross of Christ into a piece of wood in your life, and if you serve without praying, then you will be serving yourself only. Pray in your bedroom. Pray with your family; and pray in your Church community. Pray in your bedroom in intimacy with the Lord; then you will preserve your soul and open your mind to the mystery of God. Pray with your family; then you will protect your family and place it in the heart of the Holy Trinity. Pray with the Church community: then you will protect your church and bring the kingdom closer. Your personal prayer alone with the Lord will put you in the heart of God, your prayer in the bosom of the family will place you in the bosom of the Trinity, and your community prayer in the heart of the church confirms you in the body of Christ. Pray: **A person who prays lives the mystery of existence, while the person who does not pray barely exists.**

Become experienced with silence; the kind of silence that is attentive, alive, and far from the silence of nothingness. Become experienced with silence; forge yourself in love, mature in sanctity. Listen to hear, humble

yourself to understand, believe and have courage to bear witness, and **love so you may be sanctified.**

7- Christ is the Foundation of God's Building

When the lamp dims into pitch-darkness, it is filled with oil. Now the lamp is dimming, its light is fading and darkness is pitch-black. Fill your lamp with oil before it goes out and darkness engulfs you.

Attend to the oil of the lamp by whose light you remain awake. Attend to the oil of the lamp that lights up your nights. The lamp that watches over you, watch over it. Your lamp is dimming and the light of your home has become darker. You are absorbed, looking in front of you, ignoring the light that lights up your darkness.

Light up your darkness with your lamp as it is night; do not sleep in darkness awaiting the light of day to shine. When the light of day shines, another work starts and you will be asked about the night's work. If the light of your lamp dims due to lack of oil, fill it up with oil, do not stay up under your brother's light and leave your lamp to go out; you will be asked about your lamp under the light of which you should stay up, and that went out. Let the light shine in every lamp until the day shines. A lamp is filled with oil; it is neither filled with intentions and wishes nor with water for humiliation; take care of your lamp's light before your work and your production.

Reexamine your priorities. Your ladder is upside down. The small rung is at the bottom and the big rung is at the top. See how the wise builder's building rises: the biggest stone at the bottom and the smallest stone at the top. Many people nowadays are building their walls in reverse: they no longer know the large from the small, the first from the last, and the important from the most important. The wall whose smallest stone is at the bottom, and whose biggest stone is at the top, will crumble and the building will collapse. Many are the walls that are collapsing, and the bonds that are breaking due to the ignorance of the workers and the pride of the builders.

You, raise your building with wisdom; build on the foundation of Christ, the essential stone for all your building that supports all your bonds. Place your large stones at the foundation and the smaller ones at the top; and if in one of the walls of your building you see a big stone in

the high course and a small stone in the foundation, then take down your entire wall and build it anew. No matter how big and high your building is, you had better rebuild it from the beginning than to let it tumble down, collapse and fall down on your head, or on the heads of your brothers or your children.

Rest assured that if Christ is not the foundation or every building, it will collapse and fall down. Do not be dazzled by the tall building based on man, for it will collapse no matter how high it rises, and time will erase it. If you have already built your building and have discovered of late that it is not built on Christ, then take it down and build it again. A course built on Christ is better than a high tower that tumbles down under the wind. **Christ is the foundation of the Lord's building, you are its living stones and the Holy Spirit is the keystone.** Christ bears up the whole building, and the Spirit gathers together all the stones of the vault and supports the walls. The Spirit is the spirit of love. Love is the keystone. If you remove the Spirit, you remove the keystone; the vault breaks up, the stones come apart and the whole building collapses. The Holy Spirit, the spirit of love, is the keystone that keeps the covenant. Every stone in the building has its place; every stone in a course is supported by stones from beneath, supported on its side by stones which it also supports. Above it are stones that it supports. Every stone is cut to fill its place. The stone missing from a building leaves an empty space in its place, but leaves place for rain, air, dust and wind as well. Do not leave a space between one stone and another, or else the building will end up weak. Also do not leave sand between one stone and another, for the rain will intensify and snow will accumulate causing the sand to slip and the building to fall apart. It is the power of the Spirit that holds the stones of the building together and not the sand which glues them together.

Remain firm in the building of the Lord. Persevere in building up the Kingdom, and be living stones in the Lord's temple; the stone that is not in the Lord's temple remains a stone in a pile of other stones; it has volume but no shape, or place or role, just a stone thrown in a pile of stones.

Surrender yourself into the hands of Lord, the wise builder, let Him smooth and carve you, let Him remove excess from you and complete in you what you lack, let the Lord give you the shape, the size and place.

Whether you were a large stone or a small stone, you have your place to which size you were carved.

Let the Lord build you and then you will take your place in the course. Do not put yourself in the place that attracts you: if you take a place bigger than your place, you will remain protruding and you will disjoint the whole wall, and if you take a place smaller than the place prepared for you, there will be an empty space around you. Fill your place, support what is above you, support those around you, and lean on the one carrying you. Christ bears all and the Spirit brings you together and leads you.

8- Sanctity is Your Goal

Sanctity is your goal, and perfection in love is your ultimate end. Do not stop at the means of sanctification and worshipping them. Do not make the means an end, or the end a means. Do not turn the means into an end, nor the end into a means. Do not make the means of sanctification your goal and end, and do not let sanctity be your means to other ends. Prayer is there to sanctify you; do not sanctify prayer. Fasting is there to strengthen you; do not deify fasting. Mortification is there to purify you, do not worship mortification. Your hymns are there to glorify God; do not glorify your hymns. Do not replace Christ with talking about him, for then you would be worshipping your words, and do not replace the truth with expressions that express it, for then these expressions of yours will become “the truth”. A word is never more important than the idea it expresses, and the idea is never more important than the truth it is thinking. A safe is never more important than the treasure it holds, and a chalice is never more important than the wine. The tabernacle is never more important than the bread, and the monstrance is never more important than the host.

Christianity is neither a religion nor a temple, it is not a book or a place of worship; Christianity is the person of Jesus Christ Himself. The mirror that reflects light is not the light. Distinguish between the light and the mirrors that reflect it. Do not focus your attention on the mirror, but keep your heart in the light. Do not escape from yourselves to go to God, and do not go to God so you may escape from yourselves. God

wants you to present yourselves to Him as they are so that He might elevate and sanctify them. Do not let the world push you toward God, rather let God pull you toward Him. Do not blacken through your writings the white pages that your holy fathers had written. The truth is always the same. In order for you to speak about God, you must be in the heart of God; you cannot speak about God if you are outside of Him. *And the Word was made flesh* is not a sound flying through the air. Carve in your mind every word you want to say, sculpt it in your spirit, and smooth it in your heart, bring it down from your mouth just as you set a stone in its proper place in the course. And do without the word that does not build. Do not speak except when your words are deeper and more eloquent than your silence.

Do not let your words about what is beyond the seas distract you from sailing. Go towards the essence, and distinguish between the essential and the superficial in your life, and between the fundamental and the marginal, between the core and the shell. In this world, you do not fill a basket with water, or a pitcher with grapes, or a jar with figs: just as you use the things of this earth for your service, learn how to use the things of heaven with wisdom from God for your salvation, and for the glory of God.

Every land has its own soil and climate, it has its proper tools which you use to plough and plant it, and it has its plants which blossom there and yield fruit. You can neither crush rocks with a garden fork, nor plough the earth with a sledgehammer, nor chop wood with a pick-axe. Neither do cedar and oak grow in the sand of the coast, nor do bananas and oranges grow in the rocks of the mountains. With the tools in your hand do your work, and where the Lord has planted you, blossom and bring forth fruits. If you do not take roots you cannot tower.

Accommodate your mind to existence, do not seek to accommodate existence to your mind; existence precedes you and will remain after you. The Spirit alone suffices you and brings you into harmony with God. You will understand the depth of the mystery of existence through the light of the eternal Spirit that is in you. Do not seek to comprehend the truth through your senses, for then you will be limited by the limits of these senses.

Know that your senses exist so that you may love through them, and not so that you may love them. When you love your sight, you start worshiping the creatures you see and forget the Creator Who is beyond the limits of your eyes. When you love your hearing you start loving the melodies and sounds of the world, and forget to hear the voice of God in the silence that does not reach your ears. And when you love your nose, you start to give yourself over to the perfumes of the world and forget the flowers of the prairies (the source of perfume) that God has formed for man with His love. And when you love your taste, you become enslaved to food and drink and forget nourishment. And when you love your [sense of] touch you become enslaved to the outer and forget the inner. Transcend your senses and do not drown in them; reach through them to the truth as the ray of light reaches through crystal.

If you harden your senses they will thicken, and the rays will bounce back from them like a mirror, and they will reflect to you images of the world. Do not sink into your senses, for then their joy will start deceiving you; true joy is not the joy of the senses, true joy is the one that transcends your senses, and goes past them to the heart of the light where you would drown in the heart of God, see His light and melt in His love. Go beyond your senses and go past them, go beyond yourself and then you will touch the edge of the light. Whenever you want to look to the outside, close your eyes and look to the inside, then start seeing the outside more clearly; and whenever you want to hear, cover your ears and listen to the inner voice; then you will start hearing better. **Guide your senses in order to glorify God, and do not let your senses lead you to glorify His creatures. Love to the point of self-sacrifice: blood is the only ink with which love is written**, and everything else is ink on paper. In Christ, every man is a word in the mouth of God so that all humanity becomes a song of love; and glory be always to God.

9- Your Future is the First Day in the Next World

Observe the birds of the sky how they carefully build their nests, gently lay their eggs, tenderly watch over their nestlings until they grow feathers and fly, and safeguard the trees of the Lord. You are building your nests, laying your eggs and hatching your young in trees the roots of which are struck by decay, mites are eating into their trunks and gypsy

moths are feeding on its branches. If the tree falls, your nests will scatter, your chicks will disperse, and you will be left only with bare branches to lay your wings on. You are toiling and overworking to build strong and warm nests where your young will grow, grow feathers and fly, and nest-they too.

Look after the tree just as you look after the nests; and just as you were entrusted with your nests, so are you entrusted with your trees. Look after the roots, look after the trunk, look after the branches and look after the leaves, and a few straws and a few grains of soil will be enough for you to build your nests; the branches of the tree will protect you and its leaves will shade you. Do not sink into your nests and raise their edges high so they give you security; work with the trust of the Lord, and the Lord will give you security.

As you race to ensure your future and that of your children, always remember that your future is not the last of your days in this world, but it is the first day in the next world. You ensure your children's future when you ensure heaven for them. Your children are for you to give them life, and there is no life except in Christ. Give Christ to your children, but if Christ is not in you, it is difficult for you to give Him to your children.

If you do not sanctify yourselves, how would you sanctify your children?! **If Christ were not in you, how would you give Him to your children?!** If you do not give them Christ, everything else you offer them is useless and ephemeral vanishes and will cease to exist with them. It is not with tall buildings and the guarantees of this world that you give your children security and a future. Give them your sanctity and prayers, and you will ensure their safety in this world and their future in the next world. You are seeking your success and your children's success in life, while success in life is to stand before God without shame.

Go down to the roots, look after them and be disinterested. Working on the roots is hidden, does not show and requires effort and self-denial. People see the tree, they neither see the roots nor see your work, but God Who is in heaven, sees and blesses. Look after the roots, guard the trunk, preserve the branches, take care of the leaves, and maintain the tree; God will keep your works. Look after the tree - which is enfolding, shading and housing you - from its roots to the tips of its branches, even if this is at the expense of the size of your nests.

The same time passes for the good and the bad, and if the good do not fill up time with good, then the bad will fill it with evil, and time will be empty. Every moment of your life is a basket placed before you so you would fill it from your harvest, your reaping and your crops; it stays before you for an instant, then it disappears and passes behind you and you can never bring it back. If you stop and look back and observe your empty buckets, only the tears of your repentance by the mercy of God, from the grace of God, fill them up, and the grace of God is sufficient for you; and every second is a drop of eternity if you fill it up with God. Do not let the world seize the baskets of your life, then your baskets will remain empty, and you will pile up behind you sheaves of hay that time will burn and nothing of them will be left.

Do not enter into a dialogue with the Devil; end your conversation with him before its first word, and keep your dialogue always with God. Tamp your roof after each round of rain and before it leaks, for if you slacken, heavy downpours, floods, and snow will come, and water will leak to the beams, and then the ceiling will collapse on your head and your family.

No matter how tempting the temptation is, it does not justify sin. Fill your life from the love of God and sanctify the time you are in, then your harvest will be worthwhile and your provisions lasting. Only the master of time can fill the time. Only the lord of harvest and crops can fill your baskets. Offer your baskets to Him, and your crops will abound.

10- Do Good Untiringly

The journey of the universe is the construction site of the kingdom of God. It looks like the construction site of a great temple, whose stones are from the rocks of this world's quarries, and people are the workers by the power of God and they are the builders according to His will. They extract stones from the rocks of the quarries in this world, they build them one by one, and one course after another, God gives them life and they become living stones in the temple building.

A large number of people build their own temples with stones that they extract from rocks and they claim they own them, they build them one by one, and one course after another, but they cannot give them life

and they remain dead, because only God gives life. These passing people leave the stones, the rocks and the quarries and depart from this world, and their small temples built from dead stones wear away and vanish with time. Ephemeral, they do not persist, and neither do their temples. Only the temple of the Lord is eternal and permanent because it is alive. Build the eternal temple of the Lord and be living stones in it, do not build your temporary little temples from dead stones that time will wipe out. Work with perseverance, joy, solidarity, and love; work with patience, humility and obedience to the Lord of the Temple. Because you are working with His power, build according to His will.

Do good untiringly. Do not seek after rest- rest is a great danger for you. If you see a worker not doing his work, do not criticize or judge or curse him, but rather, take your pick-axe or your sickle and continue your work; your work will cause him to work. The building is yours and his, the harvest is yours and his, and all of it is for the Lord of the temple and the God of the harvest. Look at your brother in the same way you look at yourself. You have in yourself from everything you see in your brother, because every man is you with a few differences; and instead of talking about your brother, go talk to him or keep loving silence. Do not ever condemn and do not judge based upon what your eyes see. Do not judge the water you see in the pot, for you cannot know with your eyes whether it's sweet or salty, fresh or stale, and wine casks look alike on the outside, even if the wine inside them differs. Look with your eyes at the outside and look with your heart to the inside. The heart does not condemn.

Do not claim to have absolute knowledge, and build temples the size of your knowledge, for they will collapse on your heads and kill you. Knowledge needs love in order to become discernment. No matter how much you know, if you don't love you will not understand even if you know much. Love is greater than intelligence. The logic of love is more exalted than the logic of intelligence. Knowledge devoid of love is devoid of the spirit and destructive to man. Earth is a holy planet, where the feet of the God of the universe trod, which the lights of the Spirit lit and upon which the heart of God is.

Human beings, through their knowledge void of love, have made the Earth ill; their food has become their poison and their drink their thirst, their medicine their illness. Their air is choking them, their rest is

fatigue, and their peace, anxiety; their joy is sadness and their happiness suffering; their truth is illusion, and their illusion, truth; and their light has become darkness.

Man has acquired more knowledge and less wisdom. Theories in peoples' minds have become like fog on the mountain and in the valleys, it does not allow them to see anything as it is: their theories are veiling their sight. Their buildings are rising, their morals are declining. Their possessions are increasing, their values are decreasing. Their words are increasing and their prayer, decreasing. Their interests are deep, their relationships are shallow. Their window displays are full, their inside is empty. Their roads are broadening, while their vision is becoming narrower. Their roads are numerous, but don't lead them to one another. Their means of communication are many, but not bringing them to each other. Their beds are big, strong and comfortable, and their families are small, disunited and worn out. They know how to hurry but they don't know how to wait. They hurry to acquire their livelihood, but forget to ensure their living and their lives. They rush quickly to the outside and neglect the inside.

Prisoners, boasting of the luxury of their prisons; lost, bragging of the distances they have crossed; dead, priding themselves on the splendor of their graves; they are dying of hunger while sitting on bread bowls, poor while sitting on treasures they themselves buried. Why do you go down under the table to eat the fallen crumbs, while the table is all laid for you? People are sowing the earth with thorns which now are soft and tickling their feet, but when they grow and harden, they will tear and wound the feet of the coming generations. You chop wood, stack, burn, kindle, throw yourselves into the fire you set, and you wonder why you get burned?! Humanity is lost, man is ill, and the world is burning.

God is love, He is the goal and guide for lost humanity; Christ is the medicine for the sick man, and the water of the Baptism in fire is what puts out the blaze of the world. Build every knowledge on Christ; every knowledge that is built outside the foundation of Christ will destroy you. Knowledge without spirit is ignorance. The more the building built on man rises, the more it will crush the human being.

Man will keep living in grief and worry, and will not be content or quench his thirst until he is united with himself in the heart of God.

Reach out to each other, look at each other, listen to each other, greet each other, console each other with words of love and encouragement, get out of yourselves [and go] to one another, and embrace one another in the love of Christ. Work in the field of the Lord untiringly and without wearying, let the sounds of your pick-axes fill the valleys and overcome the noise of the world, and let the sounds of your sickles remind people of the harvest season. Let your prayers to the Lord cleave the deaf rocks, and cause the dumb springs to gush out. Rocks do hear prayer and springs do speak, and they all pray and give glory to God.

11- Walk the Path of Sanctity in the Joy of the Resurrection

You are walking on the paths of your life carrying many loads, burdens and concerns, carrying jars and jars, some of which are needed and others that are useless, and you have distributed your treasures amongst your jars, mixing your treasures with your trifles, and you no longer know where your treasure is or in which jar. Some jars fall and break and treasures are lost, and you do not see or know because of the noise of your jars; and some people waste their treasures on the paths of their lives and arrive laden with pottery. Every jar that you carry which does not contain your treasure will be filled with distraction and excess weight that will hinder your journey and tire you out.

Lay down the jars of drudgery to which the world subjects you, even if you have carried them for a long journey, exhausted yourselves for them, suffered for them, and perhaps have gotten used to them. Know where your treasure is and put your whole heart in it. Put your whole treasure in one jar and carry it well. Thus you will safeguard your treasure and arrive full.

Carry one jar: the jar of Christ, and He will pile it up with love and carry it with you. No matter how full it gets it will still hold; and no matter how heavy it gets, it will remain light. All the remaining jars are all clay, and even if they were empty, they are heavy and bend your back. Choose for yourself your ways in this world, do not let the paths of the world choose you, and do not carry the jars of this world, which burden you to distract you and tire you out.

The more you increase your jars, the more you distance yourself from your neighbor. Every jar requires space, and the more your jars increase,

the more space increases around you, and you start moving away from your brother to keep the jars from bumping against each other and break. The jars become more important than your brother. In order for you to safeguard your jars, you lose your brother and neighbor. Know that your treasure is very precious, but you carry it in pottery. Every brother of yours has a very precious treasure, which he also carries in an earthenware jar. You make your jar with your hands and fold yourself inside it, you sit inside the jar and say that the world is clay; whoever sits inside a jar will see the whole world as clay. Get out of your jar and see the world as it is and not as you have fashioned it inside your jar.

Let everyone fill his jar from the treasure of Christ, because He alone is the true treasure. **In order for you to understand your brother, do not go toward him with an intellectual system created by your mind, but rather go toward him with love from the Spirit of the Creator which He has placed in your heart.**

Be full grains of wheat on the threshing floor of the Lord, when the winnower works on you and throws you up in the air in order to purify you, you would be heavy and would fall on the threshing floor to be gathered into the barns of life, do not be light, empty grains like hay straws, carried away by the wind which will disperse them outside the threshing floor and scatter them. Rest assured that nothing will fill you up and give you weight except Christ.

Fill yourselves up with Christ and you will remain on the threshing floor and come be gathered up; and as long as you are on the threshing floor, the winnowing fork will keep winnowing you, and hay and chaff will fly away. On the threshing floor every grain of wheat remains alone even if it was gathered, measure and bagged with the other grains, its sisters.

The millstone, water and fire turn the grains of wheat into one grind and one loaf. From the field to the loaf the journey is long: pray for the sickle that reaps you, for the thresher that threshes you, for the threshing floor that gathers you, for the winnowing fork that refines you, for the millstone that grinds you, for the water that kneads you, and for the fire that bakes you. **The way of sanctity is from the field to the loaf, from the earth to the light, from the manger to the Cross and resurrection: walk it in the joy of the Resurrection.**

12- Sanctity is not a Chance, Sanctity is a Choice

People seek for miracles so they may believe and see, and for messages so they may hear and know, and for a road so they may walk and reach salvation and happiness. The miracle is the Eucharist, the sign is the Cross, the message is the Gospel and salvation is through the Church.

1-The most important, greatest and holiest sign is the sign of the Cross. The Cross is the sign of God's love for you; let it also be the sign of your love for God. The sign of the Cross is a sign of love not a sign of challenge; and the light of this sign will shine throughout the whole world.

2-The salvation of humanity is through the Church, the Church is the one who is carrying on the project of salvation which Christ had begun two thousand years ago and which will not end before the end of the world. All the waves of evil will break on the rock of the Church. Commit yourselves fully to the Church and all her teachings, and do not select from among them.

3-The most important and greatest message is the message of the Gospel, which bears the teaching of Christ, and not one jot of His words shall pass away before the world passes away. Whoever does not know the Gospel remains ignorant and living in darkness, even if he had all the knowledge of the world; and whoever does not live the Gospel, is not living; do not misinterpret to justify. The truth of the Gospel remains always as it is.

4-The most important and greatest miracle is the Holy Eucharist, the body of Christ, the Paschal Lamb who takes away the sins of the world, the living God risen from the dead.

In vain you would search for signs more important than the sign of the Cross. Do not ask for messages that you believe are more important than the message of the Gospel. Do not search for your salvation outside the Church of Christ. Do not be distracted, running after miracles that dazzle your eyes, greater than the miracle of the Holy Eucharist. Keep away from deceptive magic because it will lead you to emptiness.

Avoid the sign that does not direct you to the sign of the Cross. Ignore the message that does not stem from the Gospel. Reject the miracle that does not lead you to the Eucharist; and through the Church you can

discern them all. Through the Cross, the Church, the Gospel and the Eucharist, you will be sanctified. God created you so you might be sanctified and not so that you might die.

Sanctity is not chance, sanctity is a choice. Do not wait for it to descend on you from the outside; you must live and attain it from the inside. The Kingdom of God is in your heart.

Sanctity is grace and will; the grace is from God and the will is from you. You are a potential saint; strive to be an actual saint.

13- Love is a Light that Shines

Love is not attachment, because love is freedom and attachment is bondage. God is freedom. Love is not a human emotion; love is a divine power of creation and a heavenly power of resurrection. Love is not an instinct stemming from the physical senses; it is a power of life flowing from the spirit. Love is not a dead habit that binds and attaches us, it is a power of perpetual renewal and it renews us and sets us free. Love is not a feeling directed in a specific direction, love is a light that shines in all directions.

God is not a feeling, God is not a sentiment, God is not a habit, and God is not affection, God is not an idea. "God is truth, God is life, God is the creator and giver of life. Love does not ask for a price or compensation for giving itself. Love always goes to the end.

Love that springs from a human being has for its purpose a return to the human being from which it stems. When a man loves from his self, he loves for his self, whatever be the type of his love or its strength. Love that originates from God, and which a man gets from Him, has the other for its purpose.

If your love is from God, then it is for your brother, and if your love is from you then it is for you. The man whose love comes from his self, loves his self in others, and thinks that he loves them. Never confuse love and desire, love and sentiment, love and habit, or love and attachment.

14-Confess your Sins and you will kill the Evil that's in you

When Christ ascended, the devil fell. Those people clinging to him are going with him, and whoever is standing in his way is subject to falling. Do not hold on to him and do not stand in his way. His entire concern is to falsify the image of God in your mind and heart, and falsify your own image in your sight. He wants you to know God incorrectly and see yourself wrongly. He falsifies, distorts and deludes: he tries to magnify you when you should diminish, and diminish you when you should be honored. He tries to stop you when you should walk, and make you walk when you should stop, to make you speak when you should be silent, and to silence you when you should speak. He tries to persuade you to hurry when you should slow down, and to walk slowly when you should hasten. In every case, he wants to mislead you. The devil is the biggest deceiver; the greatest forger, a vicious crook; the Lord and the teacher described him as liar and the father of lies.

The devil never comes in his real image, never does he come under an ugly image; he knows what humans like and are attracted to; he tells you about things you like to hear, shows you things you like to see, gives you things you like to touch, and feeds you things you like to taste.

When crooks forge gold, they forge it with something that resembles it, yellow and shining; and so too in order for the devil to fake the image of God – who is Love in your life - he uses the things that people call love and mixes them up with God, who is Love. The feelings arising from instinct, passion, the bonds of affection, and the enslaving habits, are all used by the devil to confuse man about the truth of God, the life-giving love.

The devil's sole concern is to impede those walking up toward the Lord. On your way toward the Lord, the devil wants:

- 1- Either to push you off the road; he will create a goal for you that would attract you and toward which you would head, so that you might go astray and be lost.
- 2- Or he will cause you to fall so you would stop; he will set you a trap in which you would fall.

3- Or he will push you back; he will weary you and discourage you so you would retreat and go back. The important thing to him is that you do not make it.

Everything that gathers and unites around good is from God, and everything that divides and scatters is from the devil. The devil prevails over people through the things of this world; the more man rids himself of them the more he is shielded against the evil one, and the more he clings to them, the more he would be under the influence of evil. The Devil is the master of this world. The more you are submerged in the world, the more you come under his power, and the more you detach yourself from the world, the more you free yourself from him. Do not forget that you are not of this world! Do not immerse yourselves in it! Sail through it, rise above it, and raise it to the Lord by the power of Christ elevated on the Cross.

In the beginning the Devil makes a man laugh, in order to make him cry in the end; and he always takes a man to hell while he is laughing, but there, there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. The man who is now laughing with the Devil will surely weep in the end.

God might make you weep in the beginning, but with God you will always laugh in the end. God always makes you weep in order to discipline you, while the devil comes to make you laugh and lead away you from Him, and when God makes you laugh, and the devil comes to make you weep, do not let him fool you.

The devil hates the image of God, he hates the man who is taking on the image of God, and wants to distort this image that is in him. The only way Satan can deform the image of God in a person is for him to stop the work of God's Spirit in him. Then, the only image that remains in this person is the image of the animal. The devil's desire is to give to the human being the image of an animal.

The first and essential weapon against the devil is truthfulness; **every word of truth you say is an arrow you shoot into the heart of the evil one; and every honest confession of sin is a spear with which you pierce his heart.**

The next essential weapon is humility. Sincerity and humility mean confession. **Confess your sins and you will kill the evil in you.**

The Devil's only concern is to distract you from God. Beware! He tries to distract you from God even in the matters of God; he distracts you from the meaning of the word that you are praying with the word itself, and he distracts you from praising the Lord, with the melody of the hymn with which you are praising Him. He distracts you from God with the prayer that you are praying to Him.

Remember well that you cannot stand in the face of the Devil if you cannot kneel before God. The Devil does not come through the windows and apertures that you keep watch over and close well. The devil comes through the door that you open.

15- Motion and Life

There is a big difference between motion and life. A person can be in motion without having life in him; and he can also have life in him but not movement. Man is motion and life. The universe with its many galaxies, stars and creatures is full of movement but not all of them have life. Life is only in God the creator. God is life.

Every movement in the universe is doomed to die, but life is eternal. Every motion has an end no matter how great it is, but life has no end. Life is eternal because life is God, and God is eternal. Motion will pass away but life will not. Man has in him motion and life; motion is limited by space and time, but life is neither limited by time nor by space. Human movement is doomed to die and has an end no matter how long it lasts, but the life that is in him is eternal.

Christ has come to give us life, and to sanctify the movement that is in us. Christ gives eternal life because He is the Son of God and life is from God. **Without Christ, our motion is doomed to an inevitable death; and with Christ we have eternal life;** and there is no option in between: either death, or life.

Sanctify the motion that is in you through life from Jesus Christ. Do not seek immortality in this world, in the time of this universe, by extending your motion in time forever, because even time is destined to die and has an end. Immortality is only in eternal life in Jesus Christ, and there is no immortal and eternal life in time because all of time is not eternal.

16- Every Family is a Holy Family

The human family on earth is the image of the Holy Family in heaven. The family passes on the plan of God from one generation to another. It transmits the love and word of God through the generations. The collapse of the family means the collapse of God's plan in humanity. It means the breakup of the message of salvation and sanctity to humanity. **Every family is a holy family because it is the image of God the Trinity.** The corruption of the family means a corruption of the image of God. The family carries the torch of light and passes it from one generation to another so the world may remain lit by the light of the Lord.

The family is the rope that binds humanity together through time, binds generations through history, so that humanity may grow and increase; and if this rope which binds humanity together was broken, and humanity gets separated from its history, it would be no more than lost generations which have neither history nor identity. The family is what gives people their human identity and impresses the image of God in them. The family is what preserves the memory of humanity; humanity without family is humanity without memory. A person without memory keeps turning in place, and humanity without memory will stop in history and die.

The family is the basis of the Lord's plan; and all forces of evil are focusing all their evil on destroying the family because they know that by destroying the family, the foundations of the plan of God will be shaken. The war of the Evil One against the Lord is his war against the family, and the war of the Evil One against the family is the core of his war against the Lord. Because the family is the image of God, from the beginning of the creation of this universe, The Evil one is focusing on destroying the family, the foundation of God's plan.

The family is the place where a man communicates with God and with his brothers in humanity. Without the family, this communication is broken and nothing can ever make up for it, and if man attempts to reconnect the broken contact using his human means, it will become fragile, weak and twisted, and humanity will become ill and warped - moving towards a slow death.

Guard your families and keep them from the schemes of the evil one through the presence of God in them. Protect and keep them through prayer and dialog, through mutual understanding and forgiveness, through honesty and faithfulness, and most importantly, through listening. Listen to one another with your ears, eyes, hearts, mouths and the palms of your hands, and keep the roaring of the noise of the world away from your homes because it's like raging storms and violent waves; once it enters the home, it will sweep away everything and disperse everyone. **Preserve the warmth of the family, because the warmth of the whole world cannot make up for it.**

-From the five messages remaining from St. Sharbel's Words

The shepherd's stick is used to guide and protect the flock against the wolves and the beasts of the forest; the stick of the Good Shepherd remains stick in his hand even though it is a scepter. The oak's crook in the hand of the good shepherd becomes as a scepter, and the ornamented scepter remains in his hand as the oak's crook. The full thimble and the full pot are alike, if you are a pot or a thimble; the most important is that you are full. Try always to be full, whatever your size may be.

Don't be distracted with outside things; the things around you, before you and behind you are less valuable than the things inside you. The truth always arises, while the world collapses. The world never gives you, but always puts you in debt, God alone gives. You cannot lift people higher than you; you can go up and draw them to you, the higher you climb, pull your brothers towards you. Christ raises you when he was lifted up, so you raise your brothers, when you are raised through the power of Christ. As you are drawn towards Christ you draw people who are around you.

Do not sell your souls in the markets of this world; your souls are very valuable; whatever the value-cons that the world pays to you, it remains cheap and low compared to their true value. Do not sell your souls, because the world cannot repay you their price, because their price is the blood of Christ, fully paid on the Cross. The kingdom of God is not a goal but a path that you could realize in yourself by the power of the

Holy Spirit; step by step, day by day, in the small details that fill the moments of your life, second after second. The meditation is to look at things as they are, not as you imagine them in your mind, or as you want them to be.

You love your idea about the person not the person himself, and you hate your idea about the person not the person himself. Beware, do not condemn, do not put in your mind preconceived ideas and judgments about anyone. Prejudices are colored lenses you put on your eyes; through which you see each person with the color of your lenses, and not with the true color of the person. Put on your head the wisdom of the nature, in your heart its beauty and in your spirit the power of its constant renewal.

When you make a mistake admit it, profess your misdeed, confess it, and correct as much as you can; acknowledging the error and correcting it make you great and do not put you down; correct what you can fix, and the rest when you confess it to God, He will recover what you aren't able to fix, and offset what you aren't able to restore... Do not justify your mistake by your good intentions: the good intentions do not lead you to heaven; your works must be good like your intentions; what count are the fruits of your labor and the consequences of your words, not your good intentions. The good intention is the argument of the ignorant; and ignorance resembles to a sleep: you don't realize that you are sleeping, till you get up. Wake up the sleepers, when they are awake they understand that they were sleeping; do not speak with a sleeper, he doesn't hear you, wake him up and then speak to him.

The more the holiness grows in man, the more he ceases to grasp it, and when he observes his holiness, it would be disappeared. Turn the word in your head, like the stone-thrower rotates the stone in the sling, and doesn't let it down unless he is sure to aim the target. The word in your mouth is like the stone in the sling, once released you won't be able to take it back. If your word won't get to its target, don't throw it because it will hurt; the inappropriate word will surely cause harm. Avoid saying the words that have several explanations, say the word that has only one explanation. Be a good example instead of giving good advices. Whenever you see a mistake, correct it in silence rather than criticizing.

The stone in the wilderness under the sun, or in the river submerged with water, or bathed with aroma, or soaked with incense or coated with colors, it will remain a stone. Only rubbles, stones, pebbles and sand, came out of the rock; and as much as it becomes soft, it gives, in its best, only dust. Being a saint is something completely different from showing that you are a saint; one is possible without the other.

Always distinguish between your desires and your needs; man longs for many things he doesn't need, and needs many things he doesn't desire. Your wealth is measured by the lack of your needs, not by the plenty of your possessions. Everything you think that you possess in this world; in reality it owns you. Whatever you think is under your dominion in this world, in reality it is dominating you. All the things in this world about which you control, make you a partner of the devil. You exist in this world to give and serve, not to possess and command. There is a big difference between involvement and commitment; live the commitment in the church not by getting involved with the community. The direction taken is more important than the speed adopted; what is the benefit from the speed and acceleration if the direction is wrong? Do not start anything on earth, if it doesn't end in heaven; and do not walk on a path on earth, that doesn't lead to heaven.

Your five senses are incomplete, the sensation completes them. You cannot be holy without passing through humanity. Things that take place in you are much more important than those that occur in your life. Always discern between the opportunity and the temptation; to grasp the opportunity is different from capitulating to the temptation; for trying to seize an opportunity is a good initiative, while submitting to the temptation is a downward spiral to evil.

The sin is like the poison; when you sin is like you drank poison; you are the one who is going to be poisoned, it doesn't matter how you drank it or who gave it to you; when you get poisoned and you die, it is unavailing to blame others.

The ignorant man clings to the dust until he becomes dust; the wise and prudent man clings to heaven until he reaches heaven. The place where you hang on, you will belong to it. Whatever gets into you and you receive it, is not yours; and whatever emanates from you and you

give it away belongs to you. Your opinion doesn't lie in what you get, but in what emanates from you; what gets into you is not you, what comes out of you is yourself. By the power of the Spirit which you derive from your prayers, transform everything that gets into you and you do not possess, to holiness that radiates from you and makes you own everything.

On the Lord's way, if you stand back a step, the devil makes you go back ten; but if you advance a step, the Lord helps you go forward a hundred.

He who spends his entire life ringing the bell of the Church, it is not necessarily to be the one who enters to heaven and saves his soul; it's better that he listens to the bell of his conscience when it announces a sin; many are those who chime the bell of the church not to hear the one of their conscience.

Do not eat to the satiety, eat to quell your hunger; for man knows when he is not hungry but does not know when he is satisfied. Man never gets satisfied. The taste of chastity is more delicious than the taste of sexual pleasure. It's not the wine that makes the man drunk, it is the man who gets drunk.