

## Selections from:

### *L'Ange Conducteur des âmes dévotes dans la voie de la perfection chrétienne*

### *The Guiding Angel of Devoted Souls in the Path of Christian Perfection*

by Jacques Coret, 1631-1721

Translated and edited by Laurent Dubois, Erin Zavitz and Benjamin Hebblethwaite

**Editors' note:** We have included some selections from *The Guiding Angel of Devoted Souls in the Path of Christian Perfection* by Jacques Coret (1631-1721) because this book is a required item to be purchased by all candidates of the *Kanzo* initiation in the Vodou religion. Although the editors are not initiated, Vodou priests who carry out the week-long initiation have informed them that various texts from the book are memorized and recited before and in the course of initiation. This book is widely available in Haiti. Hebblethwaite purchased his copy from a street vendor in 2012 in the city of Gonaïves for the price of \$10 US dollars.

#### **Prayer to All Saints**

To my saints that have happily crossed the dangers of this stormy sea, and who have arrived safely in the harbor, in possession of an incomprehensible joy, I call upon you for the love of Him who has chosen you as his princes and favorites, to have the goodness to remember me, exposed as I am to tempests and storms; to take my hand so that I do not succumb to the attacks of my enemies, who only hope to lead me astray. Oh fortunate troop, elected by the great (245) God, in your hands I place my body, soul, life, death, judgment, and all that relates to the eternal health of my soul; in your hands I place as well my family, friends, benefactors, and the loyal departed, particularly my next of kin.

#### **Another Prayer to All Saints**

Blessed Saints, my dear defenders and my beloved patrons, while you bask in celestial pleasures, I worship by your worship He who made your happiness; I love him by your love; I destroy myself with your annihilations; as he crowned you with his glory, filled you with his love, and you have been faithful to him, I congratulate you for all your greatness: your pleasures are my pleasures and your joys are my joys; I give God a thousand thanks for choosing you for his glory and having fortified you in your struggles and sorrows. I thank and I bless him for all favors that he has done for you: reign, triumph in the (246) present and for eternity; my dear patrons, permit me to ask of you your assistance and your intercession with God to live well, with the hope that one day I may enter into heaven. In waiting, allow me to pray to you incessantly, that I use your benedictions to bless God, use your praise and adoration to worship him and of your love to love him. Amen. (247)

### **Evening Prayer**

Upon entering your room, take of the holy water, get down on your knees, cross yourself, address yourself to your guardian Angel and tell him:

My loyal guardian, so charitable protector of my body and soul, having happily passed this day, I very humbly thank you for the care you had of me; all the danger and horrible accidents from which you have protected me.

Imagine that he says to you:

My dear ward, prostrate yourself before God in all humility and ask of him the grace to reconcile you with his majesty.

Before your confession, thank God for all the graces and favors he has done for you and call to mind the offenses that you committed during the day:

### **AGAINST GOD**

Omissions or negligence in your pious works, irreverence to the church, voluntary distractions in your prayers, lack of attention, resistance to grace, oaths, murmurs, lack of devotion, and resignation.

### **AGAINST YOUR NEIGHBOR**

Reckless judgments; contempt; hatred; jealousy; vengeful desires; quarrels; outbursts; imprecations; insults; gossiping; taunts; false reports; damage to property or reputation; improper examples; scandals; lack of respect, devotion, charity, zeal, and loyalty.

### **AGAINST YOURSELF**

Vanity, human respect, lies, thoughts, desires, impure speeches or actions, intemperance, anger, impatience, useless and sensual life, sloth, and not complying with the duties associated with your status.

### **ACT OF CONTRITION**

My God, I very humbly ask of you forgiveness for the sins I have committed; I deeply regret having offended you because you are infinitely good and sins displease you; I intend, with your saintly grace, to no longer repeat the sins that I have committed; I put everything in the abyss of the Holy Cross of your son Jesus, begging you, by the merits of your holy name and for the love of him, to have mercy on me, to pardon me and to receive me with grace.

### **DOMINICAL PRAYER**

Our Father, who is in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven: give us today our daily bread; and forgive us for our sins as we forgive those who sin against us; do not lead us to temptation but deliver us from evil. Amen. (28)

### **HAIL MARY**

Hail Mary, full of grace; the Lord is with you; blessed among all women, and Jesus, the fruit of your womb, is blessed.

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us poor sinners now and at the hour of our death.  
Amen.

#### APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ his only Son, Our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit (29) and born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Ponce Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried: he descended into hell, on the third day rose again from the dead and ascended to heaven, and is seated to the right of God the Father almighty, where he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the pardon of sins, the resurrection of the body, and eternal life. Amen.

#### CONFESSION OF SINS

I confess to God almighty, to blessed Mary ever virgin, to Saint Michael the archangel, to Saint John the Baptist, to the apostles Saint (30) Peter and Paul, and to all the Saints (and to you, my Father) that I have greatly sinned in my thoughts, words and actions: it is my fault, it is my fault, it is my most grievous fault. It is why I beseech blessed Mary ever virgin, Saint Michael the archangel, Saint John the Baptist, the apostles Saint Peter and Paul, and all the Saints (and you, my Father) to pray for me to the Lord our God.

That God almighty grants us mercy and that after pardoning our sins, he will lead us to eternal life. Amen.

That almighty and merciful God grants us pardon, absolution, and remission of our sins. Amen.

#### LITANY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN

Lord, have mercy on us

Jesus Christ, have mercy on us

Lord, have mercy on us

Jesus Christ, hear us

Jesus, graciously hear us.

Heavenly father who is God, have mercy on us.

Son Redeemer of the world who is God, have mercy on us.

Holy Spirit who is God, have mercy on us.

Holy Trinity who is the One God, have mercy on us.

Holy Mary, pray for us. (31)

Holy Mother of God, pray for us.

Holy Virgins of Virgins, pray for us.

Mother of Christ, pray for us.

Mother of the divine grace, pray.

Mother most pure, pray for us.

Mother most chaste, pray for us.

Mother ever virgin, pray for us.

Mother unblemished, pray for us.

Loveable Mother, pray for us.  
 Admirable Mother, pray for us.  
 Mother of Good Counsel, pray for us.  
 Mother of the Creator, pray for us.  
 Mother of the Savoir, pray for us.  
 Virgin most prudent, pray for us.  
 Venerable virgin, pray for us.  
 Virgin most renowned, pray.  
 Powerful Virgin, pray for us.  
 Merciful Virgin, pray for us.  
 Faithful Virgin, pray for us.  
 Mirror of justice, pray for us.  
 Seat of Wisdom, pray for us.  
 Cause of our joy, pray for us  
 Spiritual Vessel, pray for us  
 Vessel of honor, pray for us  
 Singular vessel of devotion, pray. (32)  
 Mystic Rose, pray for us.  
 Tower of David, pray for us.  
 Ivory Tower, pray for us.  
 House of Gold, pray for us.  
 Ark of the Covenant, pray for us.  
 Gate of Heaven, pray for us.  
 Morning Star, pray for us.  
 Health of the sick, pray for us.  
 Haven of sinners, pray for us.  
 Comforter of the afflicted, pray.  
 Help of Christians, pray for us.  
 Queen of Angels, pray for us.  
 Queen of Patriarchs, pray for us.  
 Queen of Prophets, pray for us.  
 Queen of Apostles, pray for us.  
 Queen of Martyrs, pray for us.  
 Queen of Confessors, pray for us.  
 Queen of Virgins, pray for us.  
 Queen of all Saints, pray.  
 Queen conceived without original sin, pray for us.  
 Queen of the Holy Rosary, pray.  
 Queen of Peace, pray for us.  
 Lamb of God, who erases the sins from the world, forgive us, Lord.  
 Lamb of God, who erases the sins from the world, hear us, Lord. (33)  
 Lamb of God, who erases the sins from the world, have mercy on us Lord.

ORAISON

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Agree, Lord, to give at all times to your servants the health of body and soul, through the intercession of the blessed Virgin Mary, the grace to be delivered from the evils of the present life and to enjoy eternal happiness in heaven. By Christ Our Lord, Amen.

#### PRAY

I pray to you now, oh divine Virgin a thousand more times purer than the sun, by all these honorable titles which are so many degrees to ascend to your throne of glory, to grant me that I live and that I die with the grace of God, so that after you to have praised, honored, and served here, I can repay these actions of grace in the eternal life. Amen.

I hail you, of august Queen of peace, by the Sacred Heart of Jesus, prince (34) and author of peace; make, oh Holy Virgin, that he reigns over us in peace and mercy. Amen.

We greet you, Queen of heaven, who has put on Earth he who was made for us a victim of propitiation and in whom alone is our life, joy, and hope. In this exile to which we are condemned like children of a culpable mother, we implore your intercession; we present to you our signs and moans for this valley of tears. Be our counsel, attend to our pains; and after the exile of this life, obtain for us Virgin Mary, full of tenderness and sweetness for men, the happiness to meet Jesus Christ, the fruit of your blessed womb.

#### PRAYER FOR A GOOD DEATH

O Holy Virgin, Saint Joseph, Saint Anne, Saint Joachim, and all my dear patrons and patronesses, I beg of you the favor and love that attracted your hearts to God, help me now (35) and at the hour of my death. Amen.

Next say your other prayers with devotion. Then ask the blessing of Jesus, Mary, Saint Joseph, your Guardian Angel, and all your patrons and patronesses like in the morning prayer, p.11. Kiss the ground three times, and submit completely to the divine majesty.

#### OFFER YOUR REST

Oh Good Jesus, I offer you the rest that I will take during this night, in union with the eternal rest that you took in the bosom of your Father, in homage to the temporal sleep and rest that you took in the bosom of your mother, during the time you were on earth. I give to you all the breaths that I will take during the night, all the beats of my heart, desiring that they be acts of love, praise, benediction, adoration, joy, gratitude, and of all the duties that will be owed you this night in heaven, and that they could render for you infinite worlds in eternity: moreover, I beseech (36) your blessed Mother, the glorious Saint Joseph, and yourself to love and glorify you for me during this night and forever.

Take holy water and say:

My God, with this blessed water and the precious blood of your son Jesus, have mercy on me and protect me from all harm and sudden death.

Before going to bed, make the sign of the cross at the four corners of your bed, sprinkling holy water; pray that the four Evangelists, Saint Matthew, Saint Mark, Saint Luc, and Saint John will be placed there to protect you from the internal enemy.

Before lying down, think that one day your body will be placed in coffin, covered with earth, and eaten by worms.

Pray then to the divine Jesus to take possession of your body as king, to use it as seat, and to govern all your passions.

That the Virgin Mary, his dear Mother, keep company with her and Saint Joseph, and that during your sleep, they worship his grandeur and power.

Call to your side your Guardian Angel, Saint Michael, and all the Blessed Angels, your patrons and patronesses, and all the Saints so that they love God for you during the night, they bless him, glorify him, and give a thousand praises. (37)

Before you sleep, pronounce the holy names of Jesus, Mary, Joseph, and state three times:

Jesus, Mary, Joseph, Joachim, and Anne, I offer you my heart, my soul, and my life. My beloved Jesus, I give to you my spirit, I place it entirely in your care because you gave your own to your eternal Father on the Cross.

That your final words and thoughts be:

My Good Angel, I entrust to you the care of my soul and body; watch over and pray for me; defend your ward against the crafty spirit that ceases not, like a roaring lion, to make every effort to break the pledge which God has confided in you: because how will it serve me to have won all the world, if I come to lose my soul? (38)