

## HELPFUL HINTS FOR ATTACKING SLOTH

It is never too late to begin working in God's vineyard. Even if it seems that I have come to work too late in the afternoon, I must choose to focus on the fact that there is still much work to do and join the Lord in His mission.

In dealing with the sin of sloth, St. Thomas Aquinas tells us, "The more we think about spiritual goods, the more pleasing they become to us, and forthwith sloth dies away."

*To help me resist sloth, I can. . .*

*-Choose to live in the present moment by:*

- \*slowing my pace;
- \*keeping my eyes focused only on Jesus and what He is saying to me;
- \*resolving to choose my brother and his needs before my own personal ease;
- \*being aware of how important my labor in the vineyard in the scorching heat is;
- \*embracing an interior posture of sitting at Jesus' feet at all times throughout the day;
- \*letting the Father order my day; and
- \*making a plan, for without a plan, months roll into months, and things that are important may slip away.

*-Reject mediocrity by:*

- \*meditating often on eternity and the reality of purgatory and hell;
- \*choosing to be on a heaven-bound path, rejecting mediocrity in my life or spiritual life;
- \*refusing to be fooled and lulled into complacency;
- \*exerting my will towards my ideal;
- \*raising my standard of what is acceptable for my words, thoughts, and actions;
- \*making a conscious, continuous effort to improve and get rid of my faults;
- \*often recalling throughout the day that God and His grace are with and within me;
- \*letting order rule all my work and efforts;
- \*making a schedule and immediately doing whatever I tend to put off;
- \*avoiding filling time with useless tasks;
- \*choosing to fulfill all my obligations promptly, whole-heartedly, cheerfully, and with great care;
- \*establishing a proper balance in between prayer, work, family, community, et cetera;
- \*choosing and allowing my will to be stronger than my lazy body; and
- \*resolving not to lose heart each time I fall into the sin of sloth, but rather to immediately get up and try again.

*To help me resist spiritual sloth, I can. . .*

*-Persevere in my prayer life by:*

- \*working daily at developing a relationship with God;
- \*choosing to be faithful to my daily prayer and morning offering;
- \*praying for the gift of zeal and a hunger and thirst for holiness;

- \*refusing to settle for mediocrity in my spiritual journey; choosing to put forth a little more effort in all my actions;
- \*purposely turning my heart towards God many times throughout the day;
- \*choosing to focus my attention on what God is saying to me through His words, Scripture, and events in my life;
- \*asking for a deeper love for Calvary and zeal for souls, seeing burden-bearing as a stepping stone to future glory;
- \*refusing to allow sloth to deter me from transforming union;
- \*striving to take the narrow way;
- \*joyfully embracing this charism of intercession and the call to perfection;
- \*making pleasing God my motive in all that I do;
- \*being aware of my need for God in all things for truly alone I can do nothing;
- \*thinking about spiritual truths often throughout the day;
- \*refusing to run from the Cross, but rather embracing the Cross with Jesus. This is my purpose and calling, and so I joyfully embrace it with Him.
- \*being attentive and focused while praying, refusing to let any distractions deter me in my prayer. After my formal prayer time is finished, I can identify any distractions that often try to distract me and deal with them.

*-Embrace sacrifice and purification by:*

- \*daily making a conscious effort to improve and get rid of my faults;
- \*struggling against negligence;
- \*striving to keep all rules perfectly;
- \*laboring to be free of all venial sins; perfection must be my spiritual goal;
- \*allowing my soul to rest in God. "Only in God is my soul at rest. . ." (Ps 62: 2, 6);
- \*studying the lives of the saints and allowing their examples to help me be generous with God;
- \*making a resolution and plan on how I will combat the sin of sloth in my life; and
- \*courageously imposing some sacrifice on myself each day, especially in my weakest areas, to help restore enthusiasm and generosity towards God and my spiritual life. The first steps in doing this are often the hardest; after a week of effort, this task will get easier.

*-Embrace obedience by:*

- \*choosing to obey those the Lord has put in authority over me promptly, entirely, and cheerfully;
- \*resolving not to hide anything from my spiritual director and choosing to obey their counsel completely;
- \*becoming aware that I am faithfully serving God in all that I do;
- \*choosing to do everything in love and for love of God; and
- \*rejecting disobedience as it slows my walk on the road to perfection.

As intercessors, one area that we are in ministry is praying for others by taking on sin. If we can get rid of these capital sins in our own lives, then we will be better able to carry with Jesus the burden of others' sins. Sloth and tepidity will try to hold us back from fighting our own personal sin so that we won't be able to be used in this powerful burden-bearing ministry. Perseverance is needed to fight and overcome any sloth or tepidity in our lives that may keep us from being all that God has called us to be.