

CONTENTS

Foreword by Dennis J. Billy, C.Ss.R.	xi
Preface by William C. Creasy	xv
Introduction.....	1

BOOK 1: USEFUL REMINDERS FOR THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

1. Of the Imitation of Christ.....	25
2. Of Having a Humble Opinion about Yourself	26
3. Of the Teaching of Truth	28
4. Of Thinking before You Act.....	30
5. Of Reading Holy Writings.....	31
6. Of Confused Feelings.....	31
7. Of Avoiding Empty Hope and Self-Praise	32
8. Of Avoiding Inappropriate Intimacy.....	33
9. Of Obedience for Those under Religious Vows	34
10. Of Avoiding Unnecessary Talk.....	35
11. Of Finding Peace and Making Spiritual Progress.....	35
12. Of Putting Troubles to Use	37
13. Of Resisting Temptations	38
14. Of Avoiding Hasty Judgments	40
15. Of Works Done Out of Love.....	41
16. Of Putting Up with Others' Faults.....	42
17. Of the Monastic Life	43
18. Of the Examples of the Holy Fathers	44
19. Of the Training of a Good Religious Person	46
20. Of the Love of Solitude and Silence	48
21. Of Heartfelt Remorse	51
22. Of Human Misery	52
23. Of Thinking about Death	55
24. Of Judgment and Punishment	57
25. Of Improving Our Lives	60

**BOOK 2: SUGGESTIONS DRAWING ONE TOWARD THE
INNER LIFE**

1. Of God Speaking within You	67
2. Of Placing Your Life in God's Hands	70
3. Of the Good and Peaceful Person.....	70
4. Of Pure Feelings and Simple Intentions	72
5. Of Paying Attention to One's Self.....	73
6. Of the Joy of a Good Conscience	74
7. Of Loving Jesus above All Else	75
8. Of Intimate Friendship with Jesus	76
9. Of Emptiness	78
10. Of Gratitude for God's Grace	81
11. Of the Few Who Love Jesus' Cross.....	82
12. Of the Royal Road of the Holy Cross	84

BOOK 3: OF INNER COMFORT

1. Of Christ Speaking in Your Own Heart	91
2. That Truth Speaks Quietly to the Heart	92
3. That We Should Listen to God's Words with Deep Humility and Serious Intent.....	93
4. That We Should Live in God's Presence in Truth and Humility....	95
5. Of the Wonderful Effects of God's Love	97
6. Of the Proof of a True Lover.....	99
7. Of Protecting Grace with Humility	101
8. Of Humility before God.....	104
9. That All Things Come from God and Must Return to God.....	105
10. Of How Good It Is to Serve God.....	106
11. That Feelings May Not Always Be What They Seem	108
12. Of Patience.....	109
13. Of Obedience and Humility	110
14. Of Seeing Ourselves through God's Eyes.....	111
15. Of What We Are to Do and Say about All Our Desires	113
16. That We Are to Seek True Comfort in God Alone	114
17. That We Should Take All Our Cares to God.....	115
18. That We Should Bear Our Hardships Patiently after Christ's Example.....	116
19. Of Bearing Injuries and the Proof of True Patience	118
20. Of Admitting Our Own Weaknesses	119
21. That We Should Rest in God above All Else	121

22. Of Remembering God's Many Blessings.....	123
23. Of Four Things That Bring Great Peace.....	125
24. Of Avoiding Curiosity about Other People's Lives.....	127
25. Of True Peace of Heart.....	128
26. That True Freedom Comes More from Humble Prayer Than from Much Reading.....	130
27. That Self-Love Blocks Us from Attaining the Highest Good.....	131
28. Of Those Who Speak against Us.....	133
29. Of How We Should Bless God in Times of Trial.....	134
30. Of Asking for God's Help.....	135
31. Of Setting Aside All Created Things That We May Find the Creator.....	137
32. Of Growing beyond Self.....	139
33. Of Our Changing Hearts and of Focusing Our Sight on God ...	140
34. That the Person Who Loves God Enjoys Him above All and in All.....	141
35. That There Is No Freedom from Temptation in This Life.....	142
36. That You Should Not Worry about What Other People May Say about You.....	144
37. Of Gaining a Free Heart through Total Self-Surrender.....	145
38. Of Controlling Our Behavior and of Running to God in Time of Danger.....	146
39. That a Person Must Not Be Overly Eager in His Affairs.....	147
40. That All a Person's Goodness Comes from God, Not from Himself.....	148
41. Of Seeing All Worldly Honor as Nothing.....	150
42. That Peace Does Not Depend on Other People.....	151
43. Against Arrogant Learning.....	152
44. Of Minding Our Own Business.....	153
45. That We Should Not Believe Everything We Hear and of How Easy It Is to Speak Ill of Others.....	154
46. Of Having Confidence in God When Sharp Words Attack Us....	156
47. That All Burdens Are to Be Endured for the Sake of Eternal Life.....	158
48. Of Life and of Eternity.....	160
49. Of Longing for Eternal Life and of the Promise It Holds.....	162
50. How a Lonely Person Should Place Himself in God's Hands....	165
51. That We Must Perform Humble Works When We Are Unable to Perform Higher Ones.....	168

52. That We Should Not Think Ourselves Worthy of Comfort but Deserving of Correction	169
53. That God's Grace Does Not Mix with the Wisdom of the World	170
54. Of the Differing Movements of Nature and Grace.....	172
55. Of Fallen Nature and of the Effect of Divine Grace	175
56. That We Should Turn from Ourselves and Imitate Christ by Way of the Cross	177
57. That We Should Not Be Too Dejected When We Fail.....	179
58. Of Not Prying into Things That Are beyond Our Understanding	181
59. That All Hope and Trust Should Be Fixed on God Alone	184

BOOK 4: THE BOOK ON THE SACRAMENT

1. With What Great Reverence Christ Should Be Received	189
2. What Great Goodness and Love God Shows to Us in This Sacrament.....	193
3. How It Is Helpful to Receive Communion Often.....	196
4. That Many Good Things Are Given to Those Who Devoutly Receive Communion	198
5. Of the Dignity of the Sacrament and of the Priesthood.....	200
6. The Question of Preparing before Communion	202
7. Of Examining One's Conscience and of Planning to Change for the Better.....	202
8. Of Christ's Offering on the Cross and of Our Own Self-Surrender.....	204
9. That We Ought to Offer Ourselves and All That Is Ours to God, and That We Ought to Pray for All Others.....	205
10. That Holy Communion Is Not to Be Lightly Omitted.....	207
11. That the Body of Christ and the Holy Scriptures Are Most Necessary to the Faithful Soul	210
12. That Receiving Christ in Holy Communion Requires Preparation.....	213
13. That a Devout Soul Should Wish Wholeheartedly to Be United with Christ in the Sacrament.....	215
14. Of the Ardent Desire of Some Devout People to Receive the Body of Christ.....	216
15. That the Grace of Devotion Is Gained by Humility.....	217

16. That We Should Make Our Needs Known to Christ and Ask for His Help	219
17. Of Burning Love and the Strong Desire to Receive Christ.....	220
18. That We Should Not Pry into This Sacrament Out of Curiosity.....	222
Appendix: How to Read <i>The Imitation of Christ</i> by Dennis J. Billy, C.Ss.R.	225