

The Protective Garment of Faith

According to St. John of the Cross

Teaching of the Catholic Church: the Evil One is a Person

In the Catechism we read: In this petition (of the Our Father) "Deliver us from Evil!" "**the evil is not an abstraction, but refers to a person, Satan**, the Evil One, the angel who opposes God... The devil *'was a murderer from the beginning... for he is a liar and the father of lies'* (Jn 8:44). It is him, *'who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world'* (Rev 12:9). **Through him, sin and death entered the world...** We know that we are of God, and the whole world is in the power of the evil one' (1 Jn 5:19).

'The Lord, who has taken away your sins and forgiven your transgressions, is able to protect and guard you from the wiles of the devil who fights against you, so that the enemy, who is accustomed to create sin, will not take you by surprise. He who entrusts himself to God does not fear the devil. 'If God is for us, who is against us?' (Rm 8:31)' (St. Ambrose). " (CCC 2851-2852)

The Disadvantage of the Devil

*"The devil is subject to the good in three ways: first, through his **ignorance** in supranatural things, then, through his **inability** to penetrate the power of the soul and third, through his **status of rejection**, which allows him ephemeral victories only and already stamps him as eternally defeated. " (Bl. Fr. Marie-Eugene of the Child of Jesus OCD). Jesus defeated him on the cross. And Mary confirms that in the end her Immaculate Heart will triumph.*

Conquer the Fear of the Evil One

*"The first prerequisite to defeat Satan is to never give in to **exaggerated fear**. " (Marie-Eugene Grialou) - "The Evil One tends to get power ... with frightful persons who fear ghosts and spirits, the devil or misfortune and illness. – He, however, who has good confidence in God, is spared from such attacks. " (Rev. Gassner)*

St. Ambrose recommended to those who were to be baptised to turn towards the West before baptism and to spit on the devil, then to turn towards the East and accept Jesus as their Lord. Spitting helps to de-dramatise the evil.

Master of Großgmain: St. Ambrose

St. Therese of Avila: *"The true servant of God shall pay little attention to the frightening images through which the evil spirits try to intimidate. Let us be convinced: **Every time when we DESPISE them, they will lose power**, the soul, however, gains greater dominion over them; and we draw huge profit from this. It has become clear to me that the evil spirits can do little against me if I am not against God; this is why I have hardly any fear of them. Because they can only do something against souls who are cowards and surrender to them; only against such souls do they show their power. "*

*Important: All sins which grant the Evil One a right on us, should be repented, renounced and **confessed**. This is the best service of deliverance from the evil.

* **Repentance** = detestation for sin with the firm resolution of not doing it again.

Be Wise and Use the Supranatural Weapons

*“Moreover, contempt, to which the Evil One reacts sensitively, goes hand in hand with **prudence**. Being prudent in the fight against the evil means to take to the supranatural weapons with which we are for sure superior to him. These are the sacramentals, in particular Holy Water, prayer, fasting. Where ever possible one should break off the fight, withdraw from the reach of the Evil One and by acts of faith and humility escape into those ‘regions’, which he cannot enter. “ (Marie-Eugene Grialou)*

Weapons in the Battle Against the Evil

1. Prayer and Vigilance

St. Therese of Avila: *“As soon as the Evil One notices that someone is indecisive, inconstant in the good and not firmly determined to perservere, he does not leave him in peace. He continuously instills fear and presents him with endless difficulties. “* – The following helps us to be determined:

- * Daily examination of conscience and renewal of baptismal vows (see **Folder „Healing Prayer** through Renewal of Baptismal Vows – Fig.1) (in German) and the prayers
- * Our Lady, Queen of Angels (see **Folder „Daily Call for Protection...”** – Fig. 2) (in German),
- * Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel (to be ordered with: Zisterzienserstift Heiligenkreuz im Wienerwald – Fig. 3) (in German),
- * Prayer to the Saints and the Holy Guardian Angels (see **Brochure “My Holy Guardian Angel”** – Fig. 4) (in German and English).

Order address see last page...

2. Fasting

“This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer and fasting.” (Mk 9:29)

*Fasting has a special effect in the struggle against the evil.

**“The evil spirits usually act on the senses. Thus, it is obvious that we are delivered from their influence in the first place through the mortification (control) of the senses. As it helps us to control our nature, it makes us similar to angels and, by this, gives us a certain power over the fallen angels. ” (Marie-Eugene Grialou)*

3. Holy Water

For protection against the evil, the Church has implemented the **sacramentals**. These are rites or objects which possess special power through consecration.

St. Therese of Avila: *“Often have I experienced that there is **no more effective remedy** to expel the evil spirits and to prevent their re-appearance than Holy Water. Yet they also flee from the Cross, but they return. Thus, Holy Water must have a big power. To me, in particular, it obviously*

gives extraordinary consolation, which I feel in my soul, when I am using it; and it is certain that through it I usually feel a very clear strengthening and inner joy, which I cannot explain. This is not mere imagination and not something that happened to me once, but rather often; I paid attention to it with special care. "

Every time when she was exposed to an attack by the Evil One, she asked for Holy Water, and thus expelled him: *"Another time he tormented me for five hours with such cruel pain and such a big internal and external restlessness, that I thought I could no longer bear it...Finally I said to the sisters that I would ask them to bring me Holy Water... Then I poured it towards the place where the ugly moor was standing, and he disappeared immediately. All the evil stopped as if it had been wiped away with the hand. "*

St. Anne of Jesus: *"She never wanted to go on a journey without Holy Water. And as she regretted it very much when it was once forgotten, we took some of it with us in two small bottles which we attached to the belt. Almost always did she want to wear one on her belt. "* – This shows how great everything is which the Church has ordered! As far as the topic of Holy Water is concerned, the book by Ingeborg and Horst Obereder is highly recommended (see last page).

4. Special Water Consecrations: Epiphany Water

"Apart from the simple formula for the consecration of water, there are also solemn forms of blessing... "

You may order a **lecture** on Holy Water, particularly on the exorcised so-called Epiphany Water, at the order address given on the last page:
"Epiphany Water" (Audio CD) by Fr. Alois Hüger.

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You may also listen to or download the lecture on [www.segenskreis.at](http://www.segenskreis.at)

*"..‘Epiphany Water’ e.g. is very popular among faithful people. In the Ancient Near East this tradition goes back to the fourth century. It is usually blessed with special glory on the vigil of Epiphany (6 January). The ceremony of this blessing may last forty minutes or by far longer. "*  
(Obereder)

#### **EPHPHANY WATER**

Brüder Samariter FLUHM  
Hafnerberg 13, A-2571 Altenmarkt  
Phone nr.: +43 / (0)2673 – 2271

*You may order this **exorcised Holy Water** with Brüder Samariter FLUHM. Best to pick up (address and phone nr. see left); in urgent cases a maximum of two bottles of 0,5 litres each are sent (to Austria, Germany, Italy and Switzerland). As a sacramental, it is free of charge; donation desired (among others for postage).*

#### **Tactics of "Escape"**

The Saints did not exactly choose this battle. One does not want to come across a robber on one's way, but one tries to avoid him. "Escape" is a good tactic in this. It brings us to safety

from the access, the beatings and the wiles of the Evil One. **To escape means to withdraw into supranatural areas through faith and humility, where the Evil One cannot follow.**

**St. Therese of Lisieux:** *"Often, when my inner struggles became too fierce, I ran away like a deserter....My last remedy not to succumb in the struggle consists in running away, I often made use of this remedy already during my noviciate, always with full success. "*

## **1. Exercising faith**

St. Paul calls faith a particularly suitable weapon of self-defence: *"above all taking the shield of faith, with which you can quench all the flaming darts of the evil one. " (Eph 6,16)*

**St. John of the Cross:** *"When the soul reaches contemplation through the exercise of faith, it is dressed in a new garment, the one of the divine virtues (Faith – Hope – Charity). This garment hides it from its enemies. The white garment of faith particularly withdraws it from Satan: **Faith is such a shining white garment**, that the sight of any mind is blinded by it. **When the soul comes along clothed with faith, the devil can neither see nor attack it, and it walks in it very safe and secure**; this virtue provides better protection than all the other virtues against the devil, the strongest and most cunning enemy. "*

**\*Lectio Divina** – the deep connection with the word of God through contemplation (an instruction is available upon request resp .will be sent out automatically after a registration for the **Wort-Gottes-Familie, Family of the Word of God**).

The **Lecture** *"Healing through the Word of God – Lectio Divina"* by Fr. Gabriel Hüger (**Audio CD**) in German is also available with the Brothers.

Listen to and download on [www.segenskreis.at](http://www.segenskreis.at)

**St. John of the Cross** recommended to awaken the divine virtues (Faith – Hope – Charity) to escape all temptations: *"As soon as a first feeling or the first attack of an evil tendency becomes noticeable, one should not try to resist by an opposite act of virtue but immediately awaken an anagogical\* act of love, which resists this attack. When we rise up to God in love, the soul leaves the things of the world behind it, places itself before the face of God and unites with Him. Thus, the bad tendency or the temptation is robbed of its target, so that the temptation fails and the tendency to evil lacks the field of activity... Amazed, the soul watches how alien the bad inclination has become to it. " - This method, however, requires exercise and until one has learnt it, one must make a serious effort to use all means and ways to resist the temptation.*

\* from Greek: ..... lead up

**\*Fatima:** In 1916 the Angel of Portugal appeared to the shepherd children and taught them this method to awaken the divine virtues:

**Prayer of Forgiveness:** *"My God, I believe, I adore, I hope and I love You! I ask pardon of You for those who do not believe, do not adore, do not hope and do not love You! "*

**Prayer of the Angel:** *"Most Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, I adore You profoundly, and I offer You the most precious Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ, present in all the tabernacles of the world, in reparation for the outrages, sacrileges and indifference with which He Himself is offended. And, through the infinite merits of His most Sacred Heart, and the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I beg of You the conversion of poor sinners. "*

*A flyer with these two prayers may also be ordered at the address given below.*

Faith makes it possible to go beyond the sensual area, over which the devil has power, and to enter the supranatural area, where he cannot come. Here, the soul is out of reach for the enemy and safe from his attacks and beatings.

Psychologically speaking this strategy leads to an advantageous distraction: and through immediate refuge with God it obtains supranational assistance. Running away from the enemy becomes a normal reflex, which the spiritual person perceives as a great blessing.

As soon as the soul becomes aware of the disturbing presence of the enemy, it unconsciously and, without contributing anything itself, withdraws into the innermost area of the bottom of the soul. In doing so, it feels very well that it comes to a place of refuge, further away and more protected from the enemy. And here, it experiences the increase in the peace and joy which he wanted to rob her of.

## **2. Exercise of Humility**

To escape the wiles of the Evil One, St. Therese particularly recommends the virtue of humility:

**St. Therese of Avila:** *"The Evil One can only inflict little or no harm, when the soul is humble. – God will not allow that the evil enemy betrays a soul, which in no respect confides in itself."*

**St. Therese of Lisieux:** *"The Evil One infused the certainty in me that life in the Carmel is not made for me.... I called my novice master and full of shame I revealed the state of my soul to her... Luckily, she saw more clearly than me and fully comforted me; by the way, the act of humility which was undertaken, put the devil on the run."*

The Evil One fears no enemy more than Christians who are weak and humble: *Because "... God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise, God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong, God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are..." (1 Cor 1:27f)*

## **Contrition of Charity**

The protective, shining white garment of faith finds its perfection, when we take off the robe of darkness through contrition of charity (if necessary through the Holy Confession) and put on the garment of the children of light. (cf Eph 5:). Contrition of charity immediately wipes out the sin, even mortal sin. It frees us from the power of Satan and hides us in the love of God. It originates in the love to God, whom we have hurt through our sin.

## **The Reality of Sin**

*"The reality of sin is often repressed. Some people even think that guilt feelings should be dealt with in a merely psychological way. But genuine guilt feelings are important. It is like driving an automobile: When the speedometer indicates that the speed limit has been exceeded, the speedometer is not responsible, but the driver is. The closer we come to God, who is all light, the clearer our dark sides come to light also. Yet God is not a light that burns, but, rather, a light that heals. That is why repentance impels us to go into the Light in which we will be completely healed."* (YOUCAT 229)

## What is Contrition of Charity?

Contrition is *"sorrow of the soul and detestation for the sin committed, together with the resolution not to sin again."* (Council of Trent...). When it arises from a love by which God is loved above all else, contrition is called *"perfect"* (contrition of charity). (CCC 1451-1452)

**\*St. Therese of Lisieux:** *"The Lord rejoices over those who love God and throw themselves into His arms after every small mistake, and who ask his forgiveness."*

**\*St. Faustyna Kowalska** heard from Jesus: *"If it hadn't been for this small imperfection, you wouldn't have come to Me. Know that as often as you come to Me, humbling yourself and asking My forgiveness, I pour out a superabundance of graces on your soul, and your imperfection vanishes before My eyes, and I see only your love and your humility."* (Diary 1293)

## What is the Effect of Contrition of Charity?

Contrition of charity *"...remits venial sins; **it also obtains forgiveness of mortal sins** if it includes the firm resolution to have recourse to sacramental confession as soon as possible."* (CCC 1452)

\*Contrition of charity frees us from all entitlements of Satan, which he has through sin, and hides us in the infinite love of the Father.

**\*St. Hildegard of Bingen:** *"Contrition of charity grinds the sin, until it is no longer here."*

\* To **Bl. Fr. Marco d'Aviano** we owe the miracle of the salvation of Vienna on Mount Kahlenberg on 12 September, 1683. The secret of his success was that he carried along thousands of people with his own contrition of charity and led them to conversion. Then, heaven itself intervened, and the enemies fled.

\*Contrition of charity is a **golden key to heaven**. There are innumerable souls in heaven, which would have been lost without it. But it has to be acquired and practised in life, preferably every day before going to bed.

\*A gentile may also be saved, when he turns to God on his deathbed, asks God for forgiveness with perfect contrition (contrition of charity), and at the same time desires to do what he considers necessary for his salvation. – Contrition of charity, according to its innermost nature, includes the will to keep God's commandments, at least the binding ones.

## Prayers of Contrition of Charity

Contrition of charity is a gift of God, for which one may pray with humility and which one will certainly receive from God. A great help in this is the contemplation of the sufferings of Jesus: *"Look at your Saviour, hanging in the nails, His wounds and His pain, His humiliation and His death. Look at His pierced hands and feet, His head crowned with thorns, his body overflowing with blood... Then ask yourself: What is the cause of His cruel death? It is the sin, the detestable sin!"* (Fr. T. Lanzerath)

You may find some valuable thoughts on contrition of charity in **the Lecture "Contrition of Charity" (Audio-CD)** (in German) by Fr. Gabriel Hüger.

Listen to and/or download free of charge on [www.segenskreis.at](http://www.segenskreis.at)

Some biblical role models are among others the tax collector who beat his chest and prayed: *"God, be merciful to me a sinner!"* (Lk 18:13) or St. Dismas (the right thief), who asked Jesus, when dying on the cross: *"And we indeed justly; for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong... "Jesus, remember me when you come in your kingly power."* (Lk 32:41-42)

## **Prayer**

*To You, oh God, belongs the love of my whole heart;  
and to me it of greatest pain,  
that I have caused anger in You, the Highest Good.  
Oh, wash me in Jesus' precious blood.  
I deeply regret the sin I have committed;  
I am prepared to no longer be wicked.  
My God and my Lord, do forgive me;  
Never to fall again, this grace bestow on me.*

**Amen.**

The accompanying **Lecture** *"The Protective Garment of Faith According to St. John of the Cross"* by Fr. Gabriel Hüger (**Audio CD**) (in German)  
Is available at the address given below.

Also here: Listen to and/or download on [www.segenskreis.at](http://www.segenskreis.at)

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PICTURE MATERIAL: <https://commons.wikimedia.org>, <https://de.123rf.com>, private sources

LITERATURE USED: all quotations marked with "Grialou" resp. unmarked quotations by Saints and other persons consecrated to God from: Marie-Eugene Grialou, *I Want to See God: Way of the Baptised with the Carmelite Masters*, Paulusverlag, 2013

Ingeborg and Horst Obereder, *Holy Water and Other Christian Remedies*, Mediatrix Verlag, 2006

Diary of Sr. Maria Faustyna Kowalska, Parvis-Verlag, 2009

Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church (YOUCAT), Pattloch Verlag, 2011

Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC), R. Oldenburg Verlag, 2003

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LITERATURE USED IN THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

biblegateway.com – Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition

Catechism of the Catholic Church - <https://www.vatican.va/archive/ccn/yocat.org>

worldfatima.com/en/fatima-prayers

saint-faustina.org/diary-fulltext