

# PROTESTATION OF DEATH

## SAINT ALPHONSUS MARY DE LIGUORI (1696–1787)

### BISHOP AND DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

My God, prostrate in your presence, I adore you; and I intend to make the following protestation, as if I were on the point of passing from this life to eternity.

My Lord, because you are infallible truth, and have revealed it to the holy Church, I believe the mystery of the most holy Trinity,—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; three Persons, but only one God, who eternally rewards the just with Heaven, and punishes sinners with Hell. I believe that the Second Person—that is, the Son of God—became man and died for the salvation of men; and I believe all that the holy Church believes. I thank you for having made me a Christian; and I protest that in this holy faith I wish to live and die.

My God, my hope, trusting in your promises, I hope from your mercy, not through my merits, but through the merits of Jesus Christ, for the pardon of my sins, perseverance in your grace, and, after this miserable life, the glory of Heaven. And should the devil, at death, tempt me to despair at the sight of my sins, I protest that I wish always to hope in you, my Lord, and that I wish to die in the loving arms of your goodness.

O God worthy of infinite love, I love you with my whole heart, and more than I love myself; and I protest that I wish to die making an act of love, that thus I may continue to love you for eternity in Heaven; which, for this purpose, I ask and desire from you. And if, O Lord, instead of loving you, I have hitherto despised your infinite goodness, I am sorry for it with my whole heart, and I protest that I wish to die bewailing and detesting for ever the offences I have offered to you. I purpose, for the future, to die rather than commit another sin. And, for the love of you, I pardon all who have offended me.

O my God, I accept death, and all the pains which shall accompany my death. I unite them to the sorrows and to the death of Jesus Christ, and offer them in honour of your supreme dominion, and in satisfaction for my sins. O Lord, for the sake of the great sacrifice of himself which your divine Son offered on the altar of the cross, accept this sacrifice of my life, which I offer to you. I now, for the moment of my death, resign myself entirely to your divine will, protesting that I wish to die saying: *O Lord, your will be always done.*

Most holy Virgin Mary, my advocate and my mother, you, after God, are and shall be my hope and consolation at the hour of death. I now invoke you, and pray you to assist me in that great passage. My dear queen, do not abandon me at that last moment. Come then, and take my soul, and present it to your Son. From this moment, I expect you, and hope to die under your protection and prostrate at your feet. My protector, Saint Joseph, Saint Michael the Archangel, my angel-guardian, my holy advocates, come all, and assist me in that last battle with Hell.

And you, my crucified love, you, my Jesus, who, to obtain for me a good death, have voluntarily chosen so painful a death, remember at that hour that I am one of the sheep which you have purchased with your blood. O my Saviour, who alone can console and save me at that hour when every one on this Earth shall have abandoned me, and when no friend shall be able to assist me, make me then worthy to receive you for my viaticum. Do not permit me to lose you for ever, and to go for ever to remain at a distance from you. No, my beloved Saviour; since I now embrace you, receive me then into your holy wounds. At my last breath, I intend to breathe forth my soul into the loving wound in your side, saying now, for that moment: Jesus and Mary, I give you my heart and my soul; Jesus and Mary, I give you my heart and my soul.

Happy suffering, to suffer for God! Happy death, to die in the Lord!

I embrace you, my good Redeemer, that I may die in your embraces. If, O my soul, at your departure from this world, Mary assists you, and Jesus receives you, death shall be for you, not death, but sweet repose.

### **PRAYER TO BE SAID EVERY DAY FOR A GOOD DEATH**

O Lord Jesus Christ, through that agony which your most noble soul suffered when it went forth from your blessed body, have mercy on my sinful soul when it shall depart from my body. *Amen.*

### **SOURCE OF TEXTS**

Alphonsus Mary de Liguori, *Preparation for death; or, Considerations on the eternal maxims*, trans. Catholic clergyman (Dublin: James Duffy, 1843), 461-64.

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