



**LOSE YOUR LIFE INFUSED WITH HOPE AND SWEET HEAVENLY CONSOLATION!**

 **FOX'S BOOK OF MARTYRS** is a *standard* guide for Christians. The following abridgment is from the first four persecutions under Rome when thousands of Christians gave their lives as living spectacles of Christ's Passion. Chapter II: The Ten Primitive Persecutions:

**THE FIRST GENERAL PERSECUTION** of the Church occurred under emperor Nero, 34 years after Christ's death (A.D. 67). In a whim, he ordered Rome set on fire, while he sat in a tower, playing his harp, singing the song of the burning of Troy. He declared: "I wish the ruin of all things before I die!" He blamed the fire on the followers of Christ then contrived punishments of death that only the most infernal imagination could design. Yet this diabolical persecution increased rather than diminished the spirit of Christianity. Peter was crucified upside down at his own request because he felt unworthy to be crucified as Christ. Paul was beheaded.

The **second persecution** was under emperor Domitian (A.D. 81). He put to death his own brother, senators, and ordered the lineage of David (*Jews*) put to death. John was boiled in oil, but by a miracle did not boil so was banished to the Isle of Patmos. A law was made that no Christian brought before the tribunal should be exempt from punishment without renouncing his religion. For the sake of **gain**, many informers swore away the lives of the innocent.

 The **third persecution** began under Trajan (A.D. 108). Pliny, a learned man, upon seeing the slaughter, wrote to Trajan: "Thousands of Christians are being put to death daily and their only crime is that they meet to pray a set form of prayer to Christ as a God and partake in a common meal." Ignatius, the bishop of Antioch after Peter, was sentenced to be devoured by lions. He wrote: "Now I begin to be a disciple. I care for nothing, of **visible** or **invisible** things, so that I may win Christ!" Many were crucified, crowned with thorns, and spears run into their sides in imitation of Christ's passion. The patience of two martyred brothers was so great that a pagan declared: "Great is the God of the Christians!" He then suffered their fate.

In the **fourth persecution** (A.D. 162) the cruelties used were such that even the spectators in the Coliseum were astonished at the intrepidity of the sufferers. Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, was given an ultimatum to reproach Christ to be released. He refused and was tied to a cross, encircled by fire, but when it did not burn him, they pierced him with a sword and his blood flowed out and extinguished the fire. Justin wrote in defense of Christians, causing the emperor to publish an edict in their favor. In a debate his powerful argument won against a cynic, but in a second debate the cynic prejudiced the emperor and had Justin and his followers beheaded.

The tortures to which Christ's followers were put exceeds the powers of description. Entire families were executed in horrific ways. Old, young, weak, strong, learned, unlearned, rich, poor, men, women, children, thousands were tortured as public spectacles, unwaivering in their **faith** and **hope**. These martyrs were buried in the catacombs beneath Rome, where Christians and pagans are buried alike. When the graves are opened of those who had followed Jesus and imitated Him unto death, their skeletons reveal a terrible tale, but their epitaphs read of those who followed Him with hearts illuminated with **light**, infused with **peace, sweet consolation, love**, and **triumph**, while the pagan epitaphs reveal deaths of **darkness** and **resentment**.

**JOHN WROTE:** "I SAW UNDER THE ALTAR THE SOULS OF THOSE WHO HAD BEEN SLAIN BECAUSE OF THE **WORD OF GOD**. THEY CALLED OUT IN A LOUD VOICE: 'HOW LONG SOVEREIGN LORD UNTIL YOU JUDGE THE EARTH AND AVENGE OUR BLOOD?' THEY WERE TOLD TO WAIT A LITTLE LONGER UNTIL THE NUMBER OF THEIR BROTHERS WHO WERE TO BE KILLED AS THEY HAD BEEN WAS COMPLETED" (Rev. 6: 9-11/CARD 46).

**PRAY TO FIND HOPE AND SWEET CONSOLATION IN THE FACE OF TRIALS!**

A Message from the Queen of Hearts and Souls  
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**Card 52: The Meaning of Our Existence—To Love and Serve God Eternally!**

**Jesus' Face Seen in Us Through Our Love For Him!**

**DENY YOURSELF AND TAKE UP YOUR CROSS AND FOLLOW JESUS!**

**Pray that EVERYONE would Love Jesus and Be Converted!**

PRAYER OF COMMUNION

**ETERNAL FATHER,**  
MY HEART IS FILLED WITH SWEETNESS AS I RECEIVE SWEET JESUS INTO IT. I DESIRE TO COMMUNICATE MY LOVE FOR YOUR SON MORE AND MORE. HELP ME TO DENY MYSELF, TAKE UP MY CROSS AND FOLLOW JESUS, SO I CAN LOSE MY LIFE TO SAVE MY SOUL AND REACH THE GOAL OF LOVING HIM ETERNALLY!

Amen!

THE IMITATION OF CHRIST BY THOMAS A. KEMPIS  
FOX'S BOOK OF MARTYRS—THE FIRST 4 PERSECUTIONS OF THE CHURCH

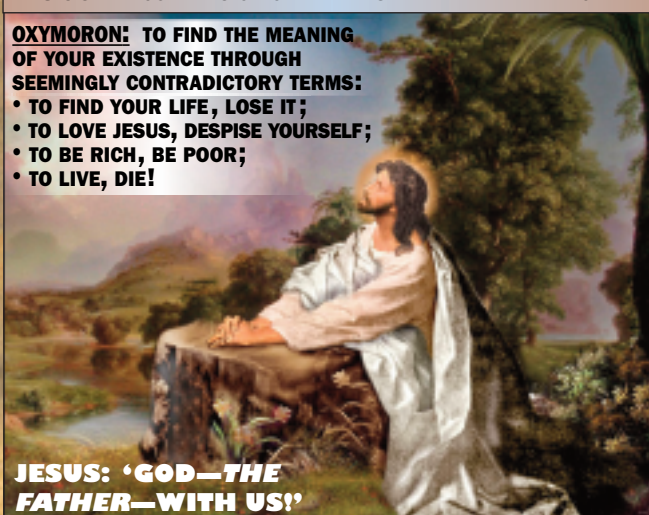
**THE TRUTH ABOUT THE MEANING OF JESUS' EXISTENCE:**  
**HE PROVED HIS LOVE FOR US BY HIS DEATH ON THE CROSS!**  
**HIS GOAL: CONVERSION OF EVERYONE IN THE ENTIRE WORLD!**

**OXYMORON: TO FIND THE MEANING OF YOUR EXISTENCE THROUGH SEEMINGLY CONTRADICTIONARY TERMS:**

- TO FIND YOUR LIFE, LOSE IT;
- TO LOVE JESUS, DESPISE YOURSELF;
- TO BE RICH, BE POOR;
- TO LIVE, DIE!

**JESUS: 'GOD—THE FATHER—WITH US!'**

**THE WORDS OF JESUS** WHEN PETER TRIED TO PREVENT HIM FROM THE CROSS: "GET BEHIND ME SATAN! YOU ARE A STUMBLING BLOCK. YOU DO NOT HAVE IN MIND THE THINGS OF GOD, BUT THE THINGS OF MEN. **IF ANYONE DESIRES TO COME AFTER ME, HE MUST DENY HIMSELF AND TAKE UP HIS CROSS AND FOLLOW ME. FOR WHOEVER SAVES HIS LIFE, WILL LOSE IT; BUT WHOEVER LOSES HIS LIFE FOR MY SAKE, WILL FIND IT. WHAT DOES A MAN PROFIT IF HE GAINS THE WORLD, BUT LOSES HIS SOUL?**" (Mt. 16: 23-28).



PRAYER TO OUR HOLY MOTHER

**HAIL MARY,** FULL OF GRACE, PRAY FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT TO HELP ME FIND HOPE AND TRUTH AND REMIND ME OF **JESUS' WORDS**, SO I CAN FIND THE MEANING OF MY EXISTENCE. **HOLY MARY,** MOTHER OF JESUS, HELP ME LEAVE VANITY AND MATERIAL THINGS SO OTHERS MAY SEE **JESUS' SWEET FACE** IN ME THROUGH MY LOVE FOR HIM. Amen!

**MARY HAS BEEN CALLING ALL OF US FROM MEDJUGORJE SINCE 1981 (CARDS 15, 31). SHE GIVES A MESSAGE ON THE 2ND AND 25TH OF EACH MONTH. THESE CARDS ARE INSPIRED BY HER MESSAGES.**



**"DEAR CHILDREN,** in this time of grace, I am calling all of you to conversion. Little children, you love **little** and pray even **less**. You are **lost** and do not know what **your goal is: Take the Cross, look at Jesus and follow Him**. He gives Himself to you unto the **death on the Cross** because He loves you. Little children, I am calling you: return to prayer with the **heart** so as to **find hope and the meaning of your existence in prayer**. I am with you and I am praying for you. Thank you for responding to **my call**" (Med. 2/25/16).

## THE FATHER'S FACE SEEN THROUGH JESUS—JESUS' FACE SEEN THROUGH OUR LOVE FOR HIM!



**“DEAR CHILDREN:** My coming to you is a gift from the Heavenly Father for you. Through His love I am coming to help you to **find the way to the truth—to find the way to my Son.** I am coming to **confirm the truth** to you. I desire to **remind you of the words of my Son.** He pronounced words of salvation for the **entire world**, the words of love for **everyone**—that love which He proved by His † sacrifice. But today, many of my **children** do not know Him, they do not want to come to know Him, they are **indifferent.** Because of their **indifference** My Heart suffers painfully.

**INDIFFERENCE** IS AN ABSENCE OF **CONCERN** WHEN A DISPLAY OF INTEREST WOULD BE EXPECTED AND PROPER. AN ABSENCE OF INTELLECTUAL INTEREST. AN ABSENCE OF A CLOSE INVOLVEMENT WITH THE **MATTER AT HAND**, TOGETHER WITH A STRIVING FOR ITS **GOAL.** LISTLESS, SELFISH, LITTLE OR LESS INTEREST, TOGETHER WITH A DESIRE FOR MATERIAL GAIN RATHER THAN THE **CONCERN AT HAND.**

**“MY SON HAS ALWAYS BEEN IN THE FATHER.** By being born on earth He brought the **Divine**—and from me received the **human.** With Him the **Word** came among us. With Him came the **Light** of the world, which penetrates **hearts**, illuminates them, and fills (infuses) them with **love** and **consolation.**

“My children, all those who *desire* to love my Son can see Him, because His face can be seen through the souls which are filled (infused) with love for Him. Therefore, my children, my apostles, listen to me: **Leave vanity and selfishness; do not live only for what is earthly and material. Love my Son and make it so that others may see His Face through your love for Him.** I will help you to come to know Him all the more. I will speak to you about Him. Thank you” (*Med. 3/2/16*).

**THE WORDS OF JESUS:** “I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE. NO ONE COMES TO THE FATHER EXCEPT THROUGH ME. **ANYONE WHO HAS SEEN MY FACE HAS SEEN THE FATHER.** I AM IN THE FATHER AND THE FATHER IS IN ME. **THE WORDS I SPEAK** ARE NOT MY OWN BUT ARE FROM MY FATHER WHO LIVES IN ME, AND HE DOES HIS WORKS THROUGH ME. I TELL YOU THE TRUTH: ANYONE WHO HAS FAITH IN ME WILL DO EVEN GREATER MIRACLE WORKS THAN I HAVE BEEN DOING BECAUSE I WILL DO WHATEVER YOU ASK IN **MY NAME** SO THAT THE SON MAY BRING GLORY TO THE FATHER. (*CARD 20: SACRED FIRE NAMES*)

“IF YOU **LOVE ME**, YOU WILL OBEY **MY COMMANDS.** I WILL ASK THE FATHER TO GIVE YOU ANOTHER COUNSELOR—THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH. HE LIVES IN YOU AND WILL BE WITH YOU. I WILL NOT LEAVE MY CHILDREN AS ORPHANS, I WILL COME TO YOU. BECAUSE I LIVE IN YOU, YOU WILL LIVE AND REALIZE **I AM IN THE FATHER, AND YOU ARE IN ME, AND I AM IN YOU—SEE YOU, SEE ME, SEE THE FATHER!**

“EVERYONE WHO OBEYS **MY COMMANDS** **LOVES ME** AND WILL BE LOVED BY MY FATHER, AND I WILL LOVE HIM AND SHOW MYSELF TO HIM. IF ANYONE **LOVES ME**, HE WILL OBEY **MY TEACHING** AND MY FATHER WILL LOVE HIM, AND WE WILL COME TO HIM AND MAKE OUR HOME WITH HIM. THE COUNSELOR,

THE HOLY SPIRIT, WHOM THE FATHER SENDS IN **MY NAME**, WILL TEACH YOU ALL THINGS AND REMIND YOU OF EVERYTHING **I HAVE SAID.** I GIVE YOU MY PEACE. DO NOT LET YOUR **HEARTS** BE TROUBLED.”

**“MY COMMAND IS THIS: THAT YOU LOVE EACH OTHER AS I HAVE LOVED YOU”** (*Jn. 14; 15: 12*).

**THE IMITATION OF CHRIST** first appeared in 1418 and is a *standard* guide for Christians. Its theme is that since Jesus Christ is *true God and true man*, by imitating *Him as a man*, you become more and more like *Him, who is God.* The following is an abridgment from the book:

**BK. 1**  
**CH. 1** **CONTEMPT OF THE VANITIES OF THE WORLD:** Jesus said, “I am the **Light** of the world, whoever **follows me** will never walk in **darkness**, but will have the **Light of Life**” (*Jn. 8:12*). These **words of Christ** admonish us to **imitate His life—follow Him—the Light of Life.**

**JESUS SAID:** “NO ONE CAN SERVE TWO MASTERS. YOU WILL EITHER HATE THE ONE AND LOVE THE OTHER, OR BE DEVOTED TO THE ONE AND DESPISE THE OTHER. YOU CANNOT SERVE **GOD** AND **MONEY**” (*Mt. 6: 24*).

† **THE GOAL: DENY YOURSELF AND TAKE UP YOUR CROSS AND FOLLOW JESUS!** †

Whoever would fully and feelingly ♥ understand the **words of Christ** must **study His life** to make their life **conformable** to that of Christ's. But even if you know the Bible by heart, what would it profit you without the **love of God** and **His grace?** **All is vanity, besides loving God and serving Him.** This is the highest wisdom: despising the **things of the world** to tend to **heavenly kingdoms.** It is vanity to seek riches which must perish, and trust in them. It is vanity to be ambitious. It is vanity to follow the lusts of the flesh, and to desire that for which you will be punished. It is vanity to wish for a long life, and not lead a good one. **Study** to withdraw your **heart** from the love of **visible things** and to turn yourself to **things invisible.**

**BK. 2**  
**CH. 1** **INTERIOR CONVERSION:** Jesus said, “The kingdom of God is **within you**” (*Lk. 17:21*).

**Convert** with your **whole heart** to the Lord and **quit this miserable world**, and your **soul** will **find rest.** Learn to **despise exterior things**, and give yourself to the **interior**, and you will see that the Kingdom of God will **come into you.** For the Kingdom of God is peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, which is not given to the wicked. Christ will **come to you** and **give you His consolation** if you will prepare Him a fit **dwelling within you.** All of His glory and beauty is in the **interior**, and there He pleases Himself. He visits the **internal man**, who in **sweetness communicates** with Him, filling him with **consolation, peace,** and **familiarity.** Prepare your **heart** for your **Spouse** that He may **dwell with you.** When you have Christ, you are rich and He is sufficient for you in all **things** and will procure whatever you need.

**BK. 2**  
**CH. 7** **THE LOVE OF JESUS ABOVE ALL ELSE:** Blessed is he who knows what it is to **love Jesus** and to **despise (deny) himself** for the **sake of Jesus:** We must **quit what we love** for this Beloved because **Jesus will be loved alone above all else.** The **love of things** is deceitful and inconstant. The **love of Jesus** is faithful and enduring. In the end you will be separated from your things anyway, whether you want to or not! Your Beloved is of such a nature that He will admit no other, but will have your **heart** to Himself, and sit there like a king on his throne. If you would **purge yourself from affection to creatures**, Jesus will **dwell with you.** But if you seek the **consolation** and **gain** of others, you will meet with **loss.** If in all things you seek Jesus, you will **find Him.** But if you **seek yourself**, you will **find yourself** to your own **ruin.** For a man does himself more harm by **not** seeking Jesus than all the world and his enemies could do to him.

**BK. 2**  
**CH. 11** **THE SMALL NUMBER OF THE LOVERS OF THE CROSS OF CHRIST:** Jesus has many lovers of His heavenly kingdom, but few that are willing to bear His cross. He has many desirous of **His comfort**, but few **His tribulation.** All desire to rejoice with Him, few are willing to suffer with Him (*cards 9, 24*). Many follow Jesus to the breaking of bread, but few to the drinking of the chalice of His passion. Many reverence His miracles, few the ignominy of His cross. Many bless Him as long as they receive **consolation;** but if Jesus hides Himself for a while, they fall into complaint or dejection. But those who **love Jesus for Jesus' sake** and **not** for their own **comfort**, bless Him **no less in tribulation** and **anguish of heart** than in **consolation.**

**BK. 2**  
**CH. 12** **THE ROYAL WAY OF THE CROSS:** To many **Jesus' words** seem hard: “**Deny yourself, take up your cross and follow Me.**” But it will be harder to hear His **last word:** “Depart from Me into everlasting fire” (*Mt. 25: 41*). For they who hear and follow the **word of the cross** will not be afraid of eternal condemnation. The sign (*standard*) of the cross will be in heaven when the Lord comes to judge and all the servants of the cross, who have **conformed to the standard** of Him who was crucified, will come to Christ their judge with confidence. Why are you afraid to **take up your cross**, it leads to a **royal kingdom.** In the cross is **salvation, life,** and **protection** from your enemies; in the cross is infusion of **heavenly sweetness!**