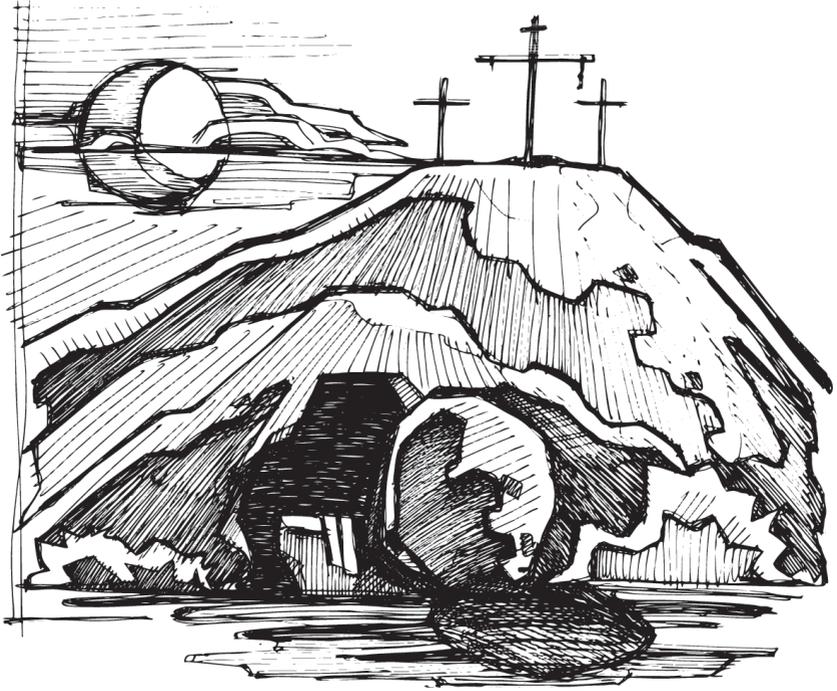




ABANDONMENT
TO
DIVINE PROVIDENCE







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TO
DIVINE PROVIDENCE



A succinct, spiritual manuscript consisting of 54 short meditations,
designed to help usher you gently into living your life in the moment.

THE POCKET PROTOTYPE

originally attributed to
Jean-Pierre de Caussade, S.J.

With an introduction by D.V. Klopfenstein, PhD, who edited the
1933 English translation by Algar Labouchere Thorold of the
1861 French publication by Rev. Henri Ramière, S.J. of the
1700s writings formerly credited to J.P. de Caussade, S.J.

The original writings from the 1700s are short and powerful. The pocket version of this book preserves this mighty brevity by retaining the core text and the minimum material needed to support its day-to-day use as a carry along companion.

For those of us who wish to have further support, the study guide assists in comprehension by providing both: background information for bible stories and people; and archaic and modern word definitions from the Merriam-Webster dictionary, cited with permission. My motivation for creating these books is to preserve the lyrical beauty of Thorold's translation, while removing the anti-Semitic, misogynistic, and racist phrases. I heartily welcome any impressions, thoughts, or corrections that you may have while exploring this pocket prototype. Please feel free to email.¹

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With All My Love to Mom and Grandma,
who showed me how religion and spirituality
can be a source of comfort and strength.

In gratitude to Mom,
who provided a solid Catholic foundation,
and with my Eternal Love to Dad,
who brought his own crucial perspective
as a Protestant to my religious schooling as a child.

Thank you to my Church, especially
the strong, brilliant, and spiritual women;
the good men;
and the children—what a pleasure it is
to watch your confidence grow as
you claim your powerful voice.
Thank you wholeheartedly to Monsignor,
the priests, the deacon, and the sisters
for their support, love, and guidance.



suffer: to endure or undergo without sinking :
have power to resist or sustain : to bear up under : support
—Unabridged Merriam-Webster dictionary



Introduction: How to use this book

This book was written to be used weekly, daily, or even multiple times a day—in short, whenever necessary. It is not meant to be read from front to back in one sitting as one does with a paperback enjoyed at the beach. It is not meant to be perused and picked over as one might do with a newspaper. It is not a lovely magnum opus in a museum to be admired for its superbness as a tourist does from a close, yet respectful, distance.

Although the poetry and the missives in this book are as breathtakingly stunning as perhaps any works found in a museum, you need not gaze reverentially from behind a velvet rope nor travel to savor them. The messages in this book are meant to stay close by your side.

Get your hands dirty—highlight cherished passages, write notes in the margins, dog-ear the pages at beloved parts, don't mind the stains from food or drink splattering onto the pages, as happens inevitably to one's favorite cookbook.

One might imagine that the original author wrote these words in the 1700s so that we may carry them during the day and keep them as twilight encroaches to guide us, calm us, and focus the mind to make our world better and lift a loving community, as we were divinely intended to do.

There are many ways to use this book. “Go by your own path and esteem that of others.”¹ My envisioned path, upon receiving the printed and bound prototypes, is to keep the longer study version on the little table next to my reading chair by the window—*lavishing into* and *absorbing* the words as they are ILLUMINATED by the setting sun. The shorter, sweet, small, pocket version will always be with me—carried like an unlit cigarette, *fiddled with* and *flipped through* incessantly until the ink smudges, staining my fingers and soothing my discomfit with salubrious anticipation of relief coming from furtively *sneaking* in my next *stolen* read. YES. I am “flawed and broken, but God knows my purpose.”¹

Each verse may be thought of as a meditation with all of the verses building sequentially upon one another. You might consider thoroughly exploring only one (or two) verses each day, starting at the beginning.

After delving into a single verse, you may wish to close the book, quiet your mind, and meditate upon the words so they may engulf you. Do any phrases particularly move you? If so, you may want to

¹*Abandonment*, tr: Thorold, ed: Klopfenstein (2024). 979–8–9908706–2–8.

Introduction: How to use this book

memorize them for use as a mantra throughout your life. Does any of the striking imagery linger and delight you? Perhaps stay and bask in the dreamscape. Have you been inspired to jump up and work on a specific task? Then do it!—with vigor and love.

Excitement may tempt you to zip through a bunch of verses all in one sitting—read on! Then contemplate the following approach: return to the last verse upon which you meditated; and turn all your attention to focus solely upon the very next verse.

Take your time. Let the words sink into your soul. After you have reveled in each and every verse, use the table of contents and leap to the verse(s) called for right now. Jump around; it feels great. “Divine action will reveal your path. There is no way which is most perfect. Grace will give you a road which will be your own.”¹

I am so glad you are here! It is my wish that your heart swells with warmth and love and you find the divine connection to fulfill your purpose in this life.

—D.V. Klopfenstein, PhD

1 Sanctity consists in fidelity to the order established by God and in abandonment to his action

1.1 Holiness of the saints of Old and our Lady

GOD still speaks to us today as he spoke to our ancestors, when there were no spiritual directors or set methods. Then, spirituality consisted in fidelity to the designs of God, for it had not yet been reduced to an art and explained in a lofty and detailed manner with many rules, maxims, and instructions. Doubtless our present needs demand this, but it was not so in former ages when we were more upright and simple. Then it was enough for those who led a spiritual life to see that each moment brought with it a duty to be faithfully fulfilled. On that duty the whole of their attention was fixed at each successive moment, like the hand of a clock which marks each moment of the hour. Under God's unceasing guidance their spirit turned without conscious effort to each new duty as it was presented to them by God each hour of the day.

Such were the hidden springs of Mary's conduct, for she of all creatures most utterly served the Will of God through her faithful volition. Her reply to the Angel Gabriel when she said simply: *Fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum*, contained all the mystical theology of our ancestors. Everything was reduced, as indeed it is today, to the complete and utter self-abandonment of the soul to God's will under whatever form it was manifested.

This beautiful and lofty disposition of Mary's soul is admirably revealed in those simple words: *Fiat mihi*. Note how perfectly they agree with those words which our Lord wishes us to have always on our lips and in our hearts: *Fiat voluntas tua*. It is true that what was asked of Mary at that moment was something very glorious for her. But all the splendor of that glory would have had no effect on her had she not seen in it in the will of God which alone was able to move her.

It was this divine will that inspired her every act. Whatever her occupations, commonplace or lofty, they were in her eyes but external signs, sometimes clear, sometimes obscure, under which she saw the means both of glorifying God and acknowledging the action of the Almighty. Her spirit, transported with joy, looked on everything she had to do or suffer at each moment as a gift from him who fills with good things the hearts which hunger for him alone and not for created

things.

1.2 Draw back archangel, you are only a shadow

“The power of the Most High will overshadow thee” said the Angel Gabriel to Mary. This shadow, beneath which the power of God conceals itself in order to bring Jesus Christ to souls, is the duty, attraction or cross which every moment brings. These are in fact but shadows similar to those in nature which spread themselves like a veil over visible objects and hide them from us. Thus in the moral and supernatural order the duties of each moment conceal under their outward appearances the true reality of the divine will which alone is worthy of our attention. It was in this light that Mary regarded them. As these shadows spread over her faculties, far from causing her any illusion, they filled her with faith in him who is unchanging. Draw back, archangel, you are only a shadow; your moment passes and you disappear. Mary moves beyond you; Mary goes forward unceasingly. From now on you are left far behind her. But the Holy Spirit, who under the visible form of this mission has entered into her, will never leave her.

There are few extraordinary features in the external life of the Blessed Virgin. At least Holy Scripture does not record any. Her life is represented as externally very simple and ordinary. She does and experiences the same things as other people in her state of life. She goes to visit her kinswoman, Elizabeth, as her other relations do. She takes shelter in a stable: a natural consequence of her poverty. She returns to Nazareth after having fled from the persecution of Herod; Jesus and Joseph live there with her, supporting themselves by the work of their hands. This provides their daily bread, but what is the divine food with which this material bread feeds the faith of Mary and Joseph? What is the sacrament of each of their sacred moments? What treasures of grace are contained in each of these moments underneath the commonplace appearance of the events that fill them? Outwardly these events are no different from those which happen to everyone, but the interior, invisible element discerned by faith is nothing less than God himself performing great works. O bread of angels, heavenly manna, the pearl of the Gospels, the sacrament of the present moment! You present God in such lowly forms as the manger, the hay, and straw! But to whom do you give him? *Esurientes repletes bonis*. God reveals himself to the humble in the humblest things, while the great who never penetrate beneath the surface do not discover him even in great events.